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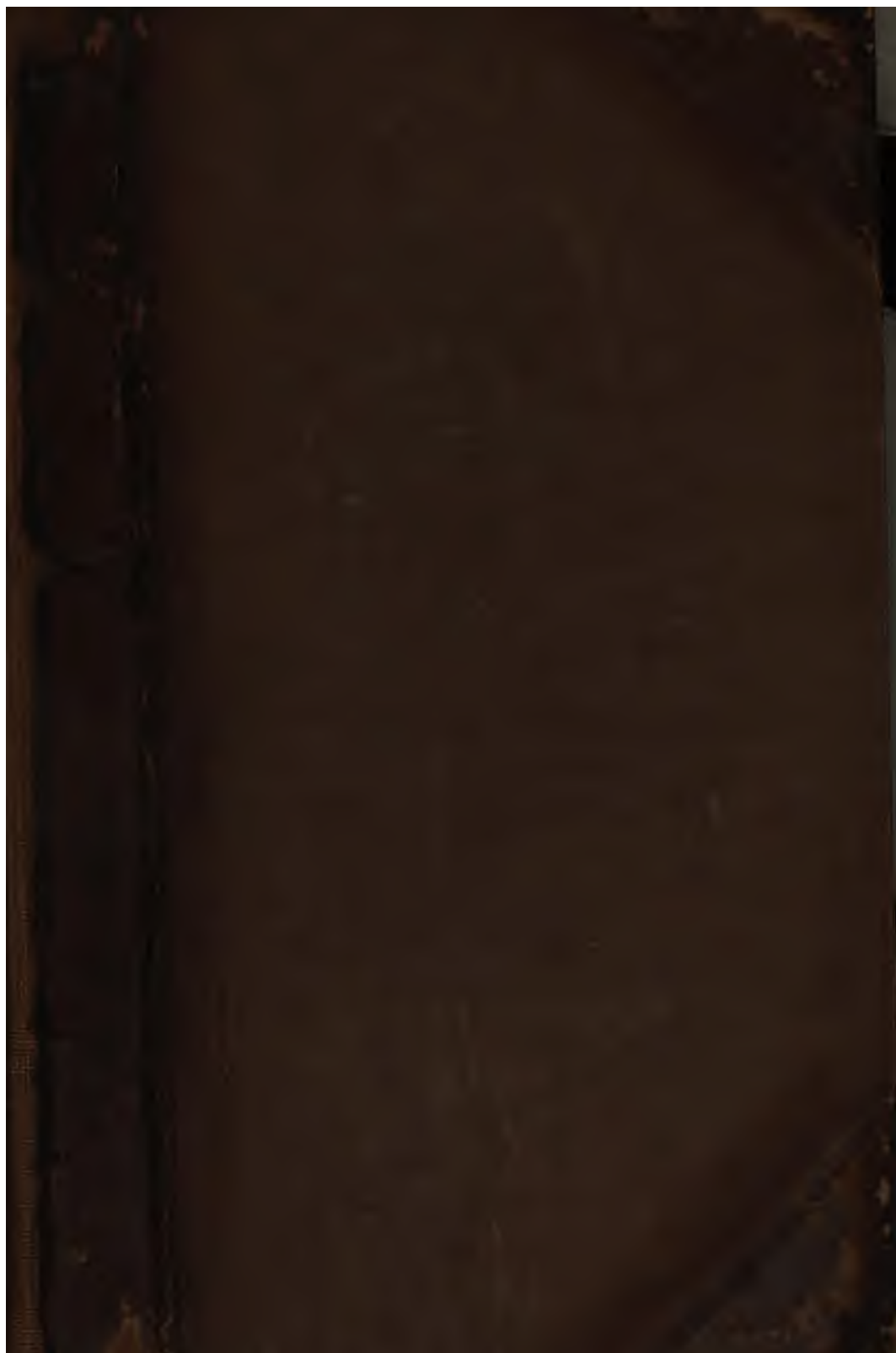
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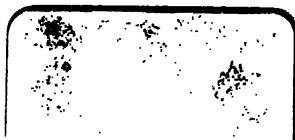


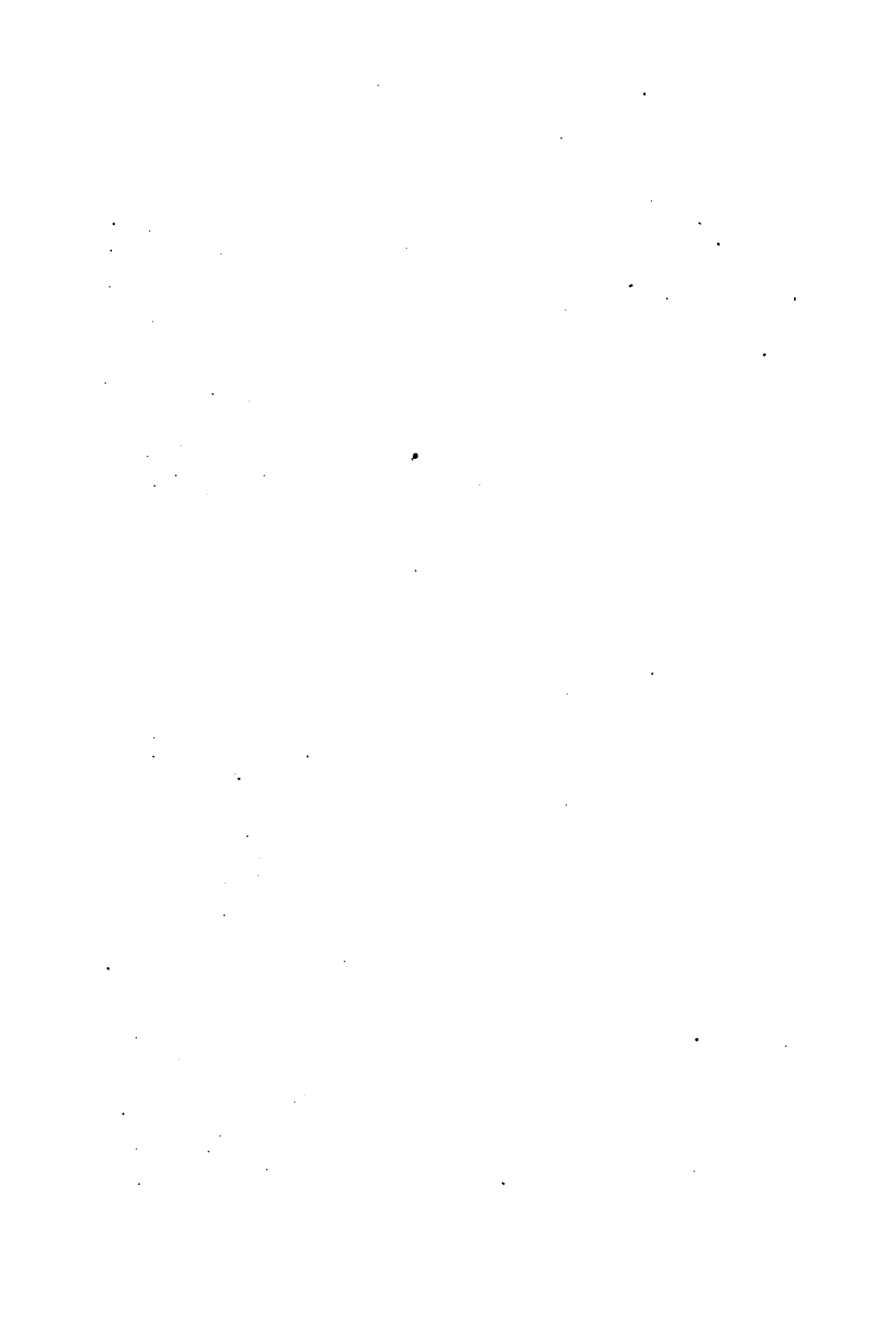


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PHILANTHROPIC ECONOMY;

OR,



THE PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS,

PRACTICALLY APPLIED TO THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND
COMMERCIAL RELATIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BY MRS. LOUDON,

AUTHOR OF "FIRST LOVE," "FORTUNE HUNTING," AND
"DILEMMAS OF PRIDE."

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."—

ST. JOHN, CHAP. 13, v. 34.

"Taxes upon the necessities of life, have nearly the same effect upon
the circumstances of the people, as a poor soil and a bad climate."—

ADAM SMITH.

LONDON:

EDWARD CHURTON, 26, HOLLES STREET.

CAVENDISH SQUARE.

1835.

590.

LONDON :
SCHULZE AND CO., 13, POLAND STREET.

TO
EVERY HUMAN BEING ON WHOM GOD HAS BESTOWED THE GIFT
OF REASON, THIS EARNEST APPEAL TO REASON, TO JUSTICE,
TO HONESTY, TO PURE MORALITY ENFORCED BY SACRED OB-
LIGATION, TO EVERY NOBLEST SYMPATHY OF HUMANITY, IS,
WITH ARDENT FEELINGS OF GOOD WILL TO ALL, INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR.

3, CLARENDON PLACE, CLARENDON SQUARE,
LEAMINGTON SPA,
WARWICKSHIRE.

MAY 16, 1835.

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PREFACE.

THE mottoes of the title page have been selected, because, from their consideration connectedly, the unavoidable inference follows, that if we would obey the commandment to "love one another," we must not tax "the necessities of life." As, however, there are so many prejudices to be contended with, and so many *supposed* clashing interests to be reconciled, before all men, (even on the high authorities here quoted), will consent to be of one mind, it is a thing much to be desired, that during the necessary discussion of the many important subjects connected with the well being of mankind, which, though thus morally decided, are still politically pending, that all those party appellations so long associated with feelings of contention and ill-will, could be laid aside.

In consistency with this sentiment, no expression of the kind is once used in the course of this little work ; for its subject being the organization of the social and political systems on the plans the most conducive to the happiness of all, it is written in the spirit of “ good-will to all.”

Rather, then, let the real friends of justice and moral order, and therefore of humanity, and especially of the poor, and the helpless, how numerous soever the motley designations they may hitherto have borne, assume, henceforward, the title which best expresses the objects they desire to promote, and call themselves the philanthropists ;—this, surely, is not flinging down the gauntlet to any man ; while let those who are pleased to oppose such views, choose a designation for themselves, expressive of that opposition. Far be it from the friends of human well being, to fasten an ill name on any one.

The good-will proclaimed by the Universal Sovereign was to men, that is to all men, and therefore it necessarily includes equal justice ; that good-will not being to all, which sanctions injustice to any—such justice as necessarily includes active benevolence ; for those who withhold from their fellow men, any good of which God has made them the medium, abuse free-will ; intercept the rays of God’s love ; and thus do great injustice.

Why is the very first commandment, “ Thou

shalt have none other God but me?" We cannot suppose that the great God calls for our worship in the spirit of a prince of this world, to swell the triumphs of a pride like that of earth! Was not, then, this concentration of all worship, in the one source of all good, almighty benevolence, demanded to teach mankind that every deviation from that equal justice which flows from good-will to all; every bowing of the knee to that supposed expediency which would deny a part of justice, is idolatry!

What were all the multiplied objects of infidel devotion, but each the symbol of some partial good: our God is universal good, therefore he is one only—and the whole family of man, as his children, brethren!

Philanthropic economy then, or a disposition of things based on the principle of good-will to all, thus necessarily including equal justice, and active benevolence, is surely a subject which ought to possess a paramount interest for all those who habitually reverence the will of God, and sympathize with the sufferings of their fellow creatures: yet how many are there who, while willingly devoting their time, their thoughts, and their alms, on conscientious motives too, to the relief of individual distress, treat as a speculative question, in which they have no part, the present pressing wretchedness of millions: a wretchedness

which continues to exist only because the overwhelming interest, the topic is calculated to inspire, is not yet universally felt, nor the important practical facts borne in mind, first, that there are comprehensive and effectual remedies which need but to be applied; and secondly, that were the prejudices of the prejudiced subdued, the attention of the thoughtless won, the sympathies of the indifferent awakened, and those of the already kindly disposed, rightly directed; the wilfully blind, in other words, the dishonest, would be out-numbered, the principle of good-will to all would prevail; and the remedies, equal justice, and universally-spread education would be applied. To subdue then the prejudices of the prejudiced, to win the attention of the thoughtless, to awaken the sympathies of the indifferent, and give a right direction to those of the benevolent,—in short, to dispose to the application of the said remedies, equal justice, and universally-spread education, every portion we can by any means reach of that great aggregate of the nation's free will, public opinion, to canvass, as it were the whole empire for voices in favor of the application to all our laws and institutions, of the good-will induced, and good-will inducing principle of equal justice, and the diffusion through all ranks and classes of people; of a reasoning, in other words, an equal justice, and good-will producing education should

surely be the constant endeavour of all those who feel an honest interest in the well-being of their fellow creatures.

The efforts of the pious and the benevolent, (and in Great Britain these constitute a great majority of the educated classes) had, it is probable, been long since so directed, had not very many amiably enough disposed persons been deterred from approaching almost any subject connected with the general weal, by the too common opinion among otherwise well, (or at least elegantly educated people) that the science of political economy is something quite distinct from religion, morality or philanthropy, something too speculative to be practical, too intricate to be understood, or too dull to be endured.

How many, in short, of those who in their hearts believe themselves to be the friends of justice and the poor, carelessly dismiss topics on which depend whether all those who have their bread to earn by honest industry shall be prosperous or miserable by merely declaring that they "hate politics."

To obviate such unmeaning objections, yet spare the reader, whose object is benevolence, the arduous task of pursuing scientific deductions through ponderous volumes, or collecting scattered proofs from innumerable sources, in search of a knowledge of what are the exertions which he is called upon by benevolence to make, it has been

here attempted to condense from the ample materials now abroad, into as short a compass as possible, and to couch in the plain, unscientific phrases of common conversation, the following slight sketch of the causes of that misery which now so extensively prevails, and of the power possessed by an enlightened public opinion, honestly, justly, and constitutionally, to relieve that misery ; first, by requiring of those to whom it has delegated, or shall delegate its authority, the decided rejection of every sophism of supposed expediency, and the fearless application to all our laws, regulations, and institutions, of the unerring principle of good-will to all ; unerring because necessarily including equal justice ; and, secondly, by demanding of all who have power or influence, public or private, cordial co-operation, for the purpose of diffusing universally a reasoning or justice-and-good-will-producing education, through all ranks and classes of people.

The benevolent, being so frequently appealed to, it may be objected that the perusal of many lady readers is thus courted ; while political economy, it will be urged, is not a subject suited either to lady readers or lady writers. To this objection, however, it is replied, that, no doubt, when political economy is confounded with political intrigue, and consequently identified with corruption, contention, and party spirit, the less women interfere with such unfeminine topics the better : but, that

when political economy is made subservient to philanthropic economy, or a "disposition of things" based on the principle of good-will to all, therefore calculated to alleviate want, enlighten ignorance, and cause the provocations of injustice to cease, and so give place to the growth of the kindly sympathies, it acquires a legitimate interest for that gentler portion of the human race, who have ever been the pitiers of all sorrow; the almsgivers of society;* the binders up, in short, as far as their limited sphere might reach, of every wound which the rougher hands, and more impetuous passions of man have inflicted.

Having thus fully explained the object of the following pages, their author hopes to escape the imputation of obtruding upon the already learned in political economy, in the shape of attempts to give them information, the portions of the work which are but unpretending gleanings from their own wisdom. Yet should the well meant purpose, together with the small compass of the volume, compared with the number and importance of the

* While on that part of the subject which relates to supplying the poor with bread, the ladies of Great Britain possess an especial and most ancient claim: it is, as it were, their patent, if not of nobility, of what is infinitely more valuable to the feminine character,—amiability. Their very title of lady means, in old Saxon, Bread Giver, and was acquired in Saxon times by the praiseworthy practice, then in use among all women possessing the means, that of appearing daily at their gates, and thence, with their own hands, giving out bread to the poor.

subjects of which it possesses to treat, tempt some light or general readers, or perhaps those benevolently intentioned persons who yet "hate politics," to look into a hitherto avoided subject, an effort so humble shall have attained to a destiny, high compared with its own merits, in being thus permitted to contribute its mite towards the spreading of opinions which, if universal, would cause happiness to become an habitual sojourner amongst us : yet which are so simple in their truth, so capable of recommending themselves by their own symmetry and beauty, that they are independent of ability on the part of those who advocate them, and need but to be fairly represented, to be embraced with enthusiasm by every human being who possesses a mind neither warped by self-interest nor devoid of understanding.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

PRELIMINARY VIEW

OF THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS.

A SHORT preliminary view of that system of morals traceable in the works of God, and to which the writer has ventured to give the title of the Philosophy of Happiness, is attempted in the first chapter of this little work, for the purpose of making it manifest to the understandings of all who will but look calmly at existing facts, that almost the whole of the evils under which mankind suffer, are caused by that abuse of free-will, which consists in neglecting to frame our artificial social circumstances (that is those arrangements which depend on exertions of free-will, such as the laws and voluntary customs of men,) on the model of our natural social circumstances, that is of those

states of being and mutual relations, which are arranged for us by that portion of the laws of God, which we commonly call the laws of nature, and over which neither individual nor collective free-will has any controul: while those laws being practically revealed (in their very operation) directly from God himself to each individual, in each individual's own nature and natural circumstances, the sacredness of their sanction cannot be contested; by which means, if we make agreement with those laws, which we thus know to come from God, the Test of Right, in framing laws and customs to be instituted by man—a standard of moral and legislative truth which cannot change, and which is acceptable to the humblest christian, because in perfect accordance with scriptural precepts, yet which compels the assent of the boldest sceptic, because the sources of its sacred authority are perceptible to the senses, is obtained, to be applied to the various laws and institutions, which it is intended in the body of this work to discuss separately.

An effort to trace, and press the practical application of such a standard, however insufficiently executed in the present instance, is at least not an uncalled for impertinence, nor as the writer might else have feared, an insult to the common sense of the civilized world, as long as we have moral writers who, even while they recommend pure morality for the happiness it brings, would seem (perhaps

unintentionally) to deprive it of its sacred sanction, by declaring "right and wrong, ought and ought not," mere "*ipse dixit*," to be refuted with a "why."* And again, while we have authors of the first respectability,† and best intentions, even in pleading the cause of justice, using such expressions as: "But whether it can be proved or not to the satisfaction of every one by the evidence of natural or revealed religion, that the Creator does will the greatest attainable happiness of mankind in this world,"—and again—"putting aside all notion of a moral sense, whose existence is yet matter of dispute."‡

* The Utilitarians. † Scrope, on Political Economy.

‡ To doubt that God wills the greatest attainable happiness of mankind in this world is to doubt that God wills moral order; for moral order perfected must produce the greatest attainable happiness of mankind, both in this world and in the next. Again, to doubt the existence of the moral sense, is to doubt the justice and the goodness of God; who, had he not given the moral sense, had left all whom scriptural revelation has not reached in total darkness. While to doubt the divine authority of the moral sense, is to doubt that God created the organization, and ordained the natural circumstances of man; for these produce the moral sense, and are calculated to produce a just moral sense, though artificial circumstances added by abuses of free-will often warp that moral sense.

It is far from being meant by these observations to infer that Mr. Poulet Scrope doubts of these matters; on the contrary, that liberal and amiable writer, distinctly asserts his individual belief in the benevolent designs of Providence: he, therefore, is only appealed to as good authority that such doubts do prevail.

And while again we have sincere christians, deeming it piety to reject the important, visible witness of natural religion; and even solemnly denying its very existence, and others, equally well-meaning, speaking of morality (the fruit, to produce which, God planted religion) with comparative scorn, as a mere code of ethics, and pressing on their hearers with enthusiasm, as vital religion, they know not what! some vague abstraction which they designate "a saving faith," while, in the wildness of their fanaticism, they pronounce good works "filthy rags;" and the use of God's sanctifying gift of reason, in the discerning of moral and religious truth, (the holiness and happiness producing purpose for which that reason was given) presumption! And while on the other hand we have hosts of licentious infidels scoffing at scriptures, at records, at documents, at miracles—in short, at every evidence which comes to them through the medium of man, and demanding demonstration, such as must compel the assent of their own understandings, through the medium of their own senses, before they will submit to any restraint—even conscience and the moral sense being, in their estimation, in consequence of their rejection of scriptural revelation, and their neglect of natural revelation, but results of the forced or artificial associations of early education.

And yet again, while we have legislators not ashamed to put supposed expediency before moral right; and others mad enough to found all social rights on mere convention, surely a standard of moral, social, and legislative right and wrong, possessing the sacred sanction of bringing its visible credentials with it, direct from God himself, home to the senses and reason of every individual being, would appear to be, notwithstanding its obvious foundation in the nature and natural circumstances of man, still a desideratum in morals and legislation. While the precepts found in scriptural revelation, and the precepts deduced from natural revelation, being in perfect harmony throughout, instead of the one sacred sanction being thus lost or endangered, a second sacred sanction is added, which, even by those who feel it to be unnecessary, must be allowed to be at least not injurious to the cause of truth.

To conclude, the following preliminary chapter, though consisting of but a few pages of the simple manifest truths alluded to, shall, for order's sake, be divided into three parts.

1. The Statement of the Theory of the Philosophy of Happiness.
2. The fundamental proposition of that theory established.
3. Inferences drawn.

After which, the body of the work, entitled

"Philanthropic Economy" shall consist of the practical applications of the standard of right and wrong thus obtained, to the abuses of existing institutions, and the remedies which those abuses demand.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS.

When it is intended to distinguish God's written will, from God's manifested will, the expressions, "Natural Revelation," and "Scriptural Revelation" are used in preference to Natural Religion, and Revealed Religion; because the latter phraseology, though usual, falsely infers, that what God has been pleased to show us, is not so much a revelation, as what God has been pleased to tell us. The expression, "Natural Social System," is used to imply all those laws of God, determining our nature, mutual relations, natural circumstances, and natural capabilities, which we commonly call the laws of nature, and which the Creator has not been pleased to give free-will, whether individual or collective, any power of modifying.

The expression, "Artificial Social System," is used to imply all those arrangements, such as the

laws, customs, and actions of men, with the use or neglect of the natural powers, and of the light of reason and revelation, which God has been pleased to leave to the option of free-will, either individual or collective.

PRELIMINARY VIEW

OF THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS.

CHAPTER I.

Benevolence, Wisdom, and Power, willing, planning, and executing the extension of Felicity by means of Moral Order, traced as visibly Omnipresent in all the phenomena of mind and matter—the being, attributes, and will of God thence inferred.—The abuse of free-will shown to be the only break in this harmony of nature.—The duty and interest of man thus made manifest.

These views, confirmed by the coincidence of God's will, visibly revealed in his works, with his will scripturally revealed in his word.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; Thyself how wondrous then!—

STATEMENT OF THEORY.

WE see all nature governed by laws, all those laws tending to one end,—that one end the extension of felicity. Hence we infer a first cause, powerful, intelligent, and benevolent. Powerful,

because we see all nature obeying these laws. Intelligent, because all these laws act in concert, tending to one end. Benevolent, because that one end is good or happiness.

Having traced benevolence willing the extension of felicity, as the great first cause, or originating principle of all things, and thus recognized the Almighty purpose of creation to be the extension of felicity, we dwell especially on the nature and natural circumstances of man; and we perceive them to be so arranged, that moral order is the only means by which comfort or happiness in this life, and the perfecting of those sympathies and powers necessary to render the soul of man susceptible of felicity in a future state, can be attained. We see also freedom of will to be involved in the extension of felicity, and yet to involve the possibility of moral evil; but that to incline and all but compel free-will to choose moral order and consequent happiness, God has not only given man reason, or the power of judging between good and evil, but also arranged all things within, as well as around man, (except still abuses of free-will) to point uniformly to the production, by natural causes of the moral order thus necessary to happiness; insomuch, that to depart from this moral order, man must so abuse free-will as to contend with every sympathy which can be traced to a natural origin, distort his artificial circumstances, so as to make them (in the formation of his sympathies) balance against, instead of

weighing with, his natural circumstances, and refuse to cultivate, or when cultivated, shut his eyes against the light of reason, displaying to him his own manifest interest, temporal and eternal.

From all this accumulation of visible evidence, we perceive that it must be the will of God, and that it certainly is the interest of man, that the free-will of man should co-operate with the good will of God, thus clearly manifested by this uniform tendency of all that God has retained under the dominion of his own absolute laws.

We also perceive that this visible revelation, by showing man the will of God, points out, not only man's duty to God, but also his duty to his fellow-creatures and to himself; for that as soon as we perceive happiness to be the purpose of God's creation, and moral order to be the appointed means of spreading and perfecting that happiness, obedience to the laws of moral order becomes a debt, strictly due not only by all to God, and by each to himself, but also by each to all, in virtue of their mutual dependence, as parts of one creation having for its object, one purpose—the happiness of all.

And that thus the perfection of moral order necessary to happiness may be always tried by the test of equal justice, for that whether it be from impiety, from short-sighted selfishness, from unkindliness or from indolence that a man is unwilling to pay, or by wilful ignorance, by intemperance, by

extravagance, or by ill-regulated tempers and affections, that he render himself unable to pay to the uttermost farthing, the whole debt of relative duties, which he thus owes to all his fellow men and to himself, it is evident that by such abuse of free-will he is guilty of injustice towards every being who loses any portion of possible happiness by his means, including himself, as well as of rebellion against that God who wills the happiness of all.

Thus, as we cannot doubt that what we see God has done, he must have willed to do, we find that we have, in the visible arrangements of nature, especially man's own nature and natural circumstances, thus pointing to the production of felicity by means of moral order, an infallible test of right and wrong, in all things, from the functions of governments, down to the most minute details of our private social duties, revealed directly from the Creator to each creature on whom he has bestowed the gift of reason; and that it is only by that abuse of free-will, which consists in not cultivating reason, or when partly cultivated, not applying it to the great purpose for which it was given, the perfecting of the moral sense, that we can err, and by erring fail of attaining happiness.*

We go on to scriptural revelation, and we find

* See Natural, Mental, and Moral Philosophy.

its plain precepts :*—"Thou shalt not kill—Thou shalt not steal—Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous—Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you," in exact conformity to this natural revelation or manifested will ; and, therefore, we perceive, (without waiting to go into any other evidence), these precepts to express the will of that Creator, in whose works we find the same will manifested. Nor is the sacred respect due to those other evidences so ably set forth in the writings of our pious divines, and so authentically collected from inspired sources, lessened, on the contrary, it must be, and is infinitely heightened, by our deriving this, still the strongest assurance of our faith, from this visible witness of the truth, ever present with us—this universal covenant, thus ever being renewed, directly from God to each new generation of men. While, by having this unchanging standard to refer to, in God's visible revelation of what is his will, which speaking the language of facts, requires neither translator nor commentator, the consciences of thinking men are relieved from the apprehension that they are called upon to take any other fallible mortal's exposition of the written revelation of God's will : on the contrary, they feel assured, that where their own or any other mortal's exposition of God's written will would

* See the Bible.

make scriptural revelation, to differ from visible revelation, that exposition must be wrong: for, "God cannot lie"—practically in his works. Yet this enlightened liberty of conscience, instead of creating divisions in religion, must secure union: for those who have but one written will of God, had they also but one expositor of that written will, that expositor the visible will of God, how could they hold other than one faith? Nay—thus would the will of God be not only made the rule of life—but, what that will is, be made manifest to the boldest sceptic, by the witness of his own senses!

This theory of the philosophy of happiness will be found, when explained, to ask no concession on which to base its inductions, but to refer us to eternal facts recorded in the book of nature, especially the nature and natural circumstances of man himself, therefore open to the perusal of all who will read. While, in the continuing course of nature we behold—like the apparition of the hand on the wall at Belshazzar's feast—not only the writing; but we see the writing being written.

FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITION ESTABLISHED.

Prior to any effort, either to enter into the details, or make the application of this simple and noble theory, consisting of religion, morality, and legislation, in their natural and indissoluble union,

which the writer has attempted to describe by the comprehensive title of the Philosophy of Happiness, it may be desirable to meet and dispose of those false exceptions, sometimes thoughtlessly urged by unreasoning ignorance against its fundamental proposition, namely :

That, in the whole order of nature, and especially the nature and natural circumstances of man, the benevolence, wisdom and power of the Deity, willing, planning and executing the extension of felicity, by means of moral order, is visibly omnipresent.

The most prominent of the false exceptions alluded to are :

- 1st The permission of moral evil.
- 2nd The permission of physical evil.
- 3rd The formation of the moral sense being traceable to natural causes.
- 4th That there are parts of the material universe which do not convey any moral lesson.
- 5th The diversities of the moral sense.

FIRST EXCEPTION OBVIATED.

First then, the permission of moral evil does not form a just exception against the truth of the fundamental proposition, that in the whole order of nature, benevolence willing the extension of felicity, by means of moral order, is visibly omni-

present: but, on the contrary, the permission of moral evil itself is to be accounted for on the very ground of the originating principle of all creation, being benevolence willing the extension of felicity.—Thus, the extension of felicity necessarily involves the creation of individual, intellectual natures, susceptible of felicity, on whom to bestow that felicity.

But individuality of intellectual being consisting in, or being impossible without freedom of will, had there been no freedom of will, the one eternal spirit had still dwelt alone, though filling the universe with his omnipresence; for the spirits of men and angels, moved involuntarily by the impulse of God's will, had been still, whatever frames they animated, portions of the Almighty spirit; and therefore, there had been no new creation of individual, intellectual natures, on whom to bestow felicity,—and, therefore, no extension of felicity. Now, the granting of free-will, it is self-evident, must involve the possibility of choosing wrong—in other words, the permission of moral evil. Thus, the proof that God wills the extension of felicity by means of moral order, drawn from the tendency traceable in the whole order of nature, to produce and perfect creatures capable of receiving felicity, and then to promote their felicity, temporal and eternal, by means of moral order, is not the less perfectly

made out, because the abuse of this, (thus necessary) free-will can, where it takes place, turn aside this tendency.

But though freedom of will, thus necessarily renders a wrong choice possible, God has made the choice of good, rather than evil, all but such a necessity as would take away free-will, by ordaining a train of causes and effects, which, unless the aid both of reason and visible revelation are rejected by free-will, must end in producing both a moral sense, making virtue delightful, and a coinciding sense of interest, necessarily inclining, and, therefore, all but compelling free-will to choose good, rather than evil.

SECOND EXCEPTION OBVIATED.

Neither is the permission of physical evil a just exception against the proposition, that all God's works tend to the extension of felicity by means of moral order. On the contrary, the permission of physical evil is also to be accounted for on the ground of benevolence willing the extension of felicity by means of moral order. Thus, without the liability to suffer by bodily pain, and by wants not satisfied, the whole class of simple ideas, or perceptions through sense, which are the materials that reason has to work up, and on the combinations of which, by association, are founded respect for moral rectitude, for industry, for benevolence,

for generous exertions, as well as all the gentler sympathies constituting compassion, the joy of giving relief, and that peculiar tenderness which helplessness excites, the very capability of bringing home to our hearts the all comprehensive precept, "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you," would have been wanting: and thus, the wondrous machinery by which power, informed by wisdom, gifts intellectual nature with susceptibilities, adds faculty to faculty, and at length produces a being capable of receiving present happiness and of enjoying eternal felicity, would have been so imperfect, as to have been totally inadequate to the end proposed by benevolence: namely, the extension of felicity. So that here again, as in the case of moral evil, Almighty benevolence has ordained a beautiful provision, maintaining the tendency of all things to the extension of felicity by means of moral order; in the use of reason, guided by experience on our own behalf, and inclined by a sympathy derived from experience and association, on that of our fellow men to obviate, or to remedy much of physical evil, out of which exercises of reason and sympathy arise, sagacity in the one case, in the other a purity of joy not derivable from any other source, and which, more perhaps than any other of all the means willed by benevolence, devised by wisdom, and executed by power, lifts the soul above all selfish and unjust desires, and gifts it

with the faculties which are rendering it susceptible of that promised bliss, which “ eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.”

THIRD EXCEPTION OBVIATED.

Nor is the third exception, namely the moral sense being traceable to natural causes, more valid. For surely the moral sense, God's great instrument for the production of the happiness of his creatures, is not less expressly the gift of God, because traceable to natural means, therefore to means ordained by the God of nature. On the contrary, it is by tracing those means at work, that we are especially enabled to perceive the whole universe, material and intellectual, (except rebellious free-will) co-operating with God in his one, eternal, universal, purpose—the extension of felicity by means of moral order. The proof, therefore, that God has willed the extension of felicity, by means of moral order, drawn from the tendency of the moral sense to produce virtue or moral order, and consequent happiness here and susceptibility of felicity hereafter, is not in any wise weakened by tracing the moral sense to be the result of the elementary ideas we derive from the impressions received through the senses, and their combinations under the education of natural and artificial circumstances, superintended by cultivated reason ;

for free-will being, as we have seen, necessary to the extension of felicity, yet involving the possibility of choosing wrong, God, to preserve his creatures from choosing misery, ordained the moral sense to incline free-will to choose moral order. But, as God does all things by adapting means to ends, (for the evident purpose of suggesting to us the adaptation of the means he has entrusted to us, to the ends he has ordained), he gave man such an organization as should convey to him, first, the simple perceptions of pleasure and pain, on which to found the elementary ideas of individual happiness and suffering; while, to lead him on from selfish or elementary, to reflected or sympathetic happiness or suffering, in spreading and seeing spread that happiness and suffering, he placed him in such natural circumstances of dependence on his fellow men, and their performance of the duties of moral order, from the moment of his birth to the hour of his death: first, during the helplessness of infancy and childhood, for his commonest wants, and earliest or elementary joys, and in after life for pleasures of a higher range, and more complicated nature, but still demanding fellowship and mutual aid; that out of these experiences, combined by association, and superintended by reason, there could not fail to arise a moral sense, or perception of the fitness, beauty, and desirableness of moral order, which must dictate reverence, love, and approbation of equal

justice, active benevolence, and patient forbearance; virtues out of the practice of which must again as necessarily arise those feelings of goodwill to all which, in their turn, produce every noblest sympathy of man's nature, and the tendency of all which train of causes and effects, therefore, if not broken by the abuse of free-will, is clearly, not only to secure man's happiness here, but to ensure the ultimate purpose of creation, namely, the rendering the spiritual, or intellectual part of man's being susceptible of eternal felicity hereafter. For a moment's reflection must suffice to convince every thinking mind that heaven would have no joys for him whose intellectual faculties and good-will-producing sympathies had not been cultivated; even under the childish supposition that heaven had its locality and its boundary, and that such a being could find admission there: while, if we view heaven as consisting in a state of intellectual perfection, constituting bliss, wherever located, it is needless to add that the state of being must exist before the bliss can be enjoyed.

Thus also, tracing the formation of the moral sense proves, in the most satisfactory manner, that the mere instinct of the sentient being, seeking pleasure and avoiding pain, has no claim to be impiously erected into either the first mover, or the guide, in the production of happiness; by showing clearly that this instinct requires, at every step, the

guidance of the reasoning or comparing powers, to prevent its doing infinitely more harm than good, not only to others, but also to the being moved by its impulses ; and that it is thus, not only no guide itself, but that it is liable to warp that reason appointed to be its guide, unless that reason has yet another guide. Now, the " Good will to all " of God himself, willing the happiness of his creatures, being the source of both the instinct, and of the reason which guides the instinct, is thus the first cause of the happiness, which is the product of both ; while it is the will of that first cause, pointed out by the course of his providence, and discerned as its law by the reason he has given, which is the guide to that happiness.

And thus it is that the wondrous processes traced in the systems of mental philosophy, when viewed in this their connexion with their necessary result, the moral sense, instead of proving that moral sense not to possess divine authority, furnish so many sublime and beautiful evidences of the admirable fitness with which perfect wisdom has adjusted means, to the fulfilment of the end proposed by perfect goodness, namely, the production of felicity, temporal and eternal.

Whether, therefore, the Almighty had gifted his creatures with a moral sense as a mere instinct, or ordained that the fitness of justice, forbearance, and good-will, to induce the happiness of themselves and all around them, should produce in them, by

associations reasoned upon, such a sense of right and wrong, is—as far as the fact of the moral sense being the gift of God—virtually the same thing; the question is reduced to this: has God willed a certain end directly, or as the consequence of certain means?

Now, whether we read “God said let there be light, and there was light!” or whether we read, “God created the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night,” we equally recognise in God the author of light. That God, then, who so organised man, that he must receive certain impressions, and placed him in such circumstances that the elementary ideas obtained through those impressions, must, by means of association, combine into certain sympathies, which, reasoned upon, must again combine into certain trains of connected thought, whispering to each heart the christian precept “Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you,” and thus ending in a strong moral sense of a thus clearly defined right and wrong, is as undeniably the author and giver of that moral sense; as manifestly the great first cause, who wills felicity by means of moral order; as evidently the authority which forbids injustice, and commands good-will, as though his voice were heard in the clouds of heaven proclaiming aloud, from day to day, to all the nations of the earth, the ten commandments of Mount Sinai!

Thus, then, the more clearly we are enabled, by

tracing the operations of mind, to perceive, as it were, the vital spark or soul of man acquiring, through its mysterious connexion with the machinery of the body, and by means of the training circumstances of mortal life, its perceptions, affections, sympathies, and experiences, and erected on these, the varied range of its intellectual powers and faculties: in short, its sagacity to choose, and its susceptibility to enjoy real and eternal felicity, the more visibly do we recognise, in the whole order of nature, benevolence willing the extension of felicity by means of moral order; and the more obviously do we discern all things down to each minutest portion of inert matter, arranged by wisdom, and moved by Omnipotence, co-operating with Omnipresent benevolence, in the same all-gracious design, the limitless extension of life, immortality, and felicity.

Whereas, were the soul of man endowed with all its intellectual powers and susceptibilities, prior to its being placed by its Creator in the present life, and that it were clothed with humanity and sent into this world as a state of probation only, and that, thus, all the wondrous apparatus of creation were but subservient to its convenience, while using the powers it brought with it into the world, in adding to those powers the very imperfect degrees of virtue we see attained in this life; the success (that is the often small share of virtue attained, distinct from the powers acquired), would

scarcely seem adequate to the mighty preparation. But when we view the gift of individual life, as but the embryo of the intellectual being, the varied powers and susceptibilities of which are both to be produced, and partly, at least, educated during moral existence, and then look at the whole material universe, and especially the organization of man himself, as wondrous machinery for the gradual production of those intellectual powers, and consequent susceptibilities of future virtue and felicity, with which the intellectual being is destined by its Creator to be eventually furnished ; and that, thus, not only every virtuous disposition, but every capability of appreciating virtue, or judging between right and wrong, every accession of sagacity, every shade of thought or of feeling, acquired and added to the immortal vital spark, or gift of existence is a treasure amassed for eternity to be, in future stages of being, adapted to purposes, and made the foundation of degrees of virtue and felicity, which, in this life, we are possibly as incapable of comprehending as of attaining to, and which constitute " the joys which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Thus viewed, the marvellous apparatus of man himself, the wondrous world in which he lives, the stupendous universe in which that world is a speck, the elaborate application of Almighty mind in the adaptation of means to ends, are all worthily and sublimely accounted for. Thus

viewed, the commonest necessities of mortal life are ennobled ; and the toiling multitude labouring for their daily bread, with all things else that maintain the course of nature or keep this material machinery, thus required for so important a moral and intellectual purpose, in repair, are visibly aiding in the splendid design of benevolence, wisdom, and power, willing, planning, and executing the extension of felicity, by means of moral order.

This doctrine of the soul of man being not only in a state of probation during mortal existence, but being actually undergoing a gradual process of creation, and the whole material universe having been formed but to be machinery which, moved by the Almighty fiat, is performing certain stages of the process, is strictly analogous to the whole course of God's visible providence. It is surely in perfect harmony with all that we behold in our original instructor, the book of nature, that God, who has been pleased to ordain the production of all things, from the blade of grass upwards, by the adaptation of means to ends, should have been further pleased to ordain that the ends of all other means should be but means to this the ultimate end, namely, intellectual nature perfected, or capability of the highest order of virtue, and susceptibility of the highest order of felicity produced, to be transplanted into an eternal future !

If God has been pleased to work out physical purposes by the adaptation of means to ends, that

man, while looking on at the operations of nature, might learn to adapt the laws of physical nature to useful physical sciences; can it be doubted that God has been pleased also to adapt means to ends, in the production of intellectual powers, and good will producing sympathies, for the far more important purpose of suggesting to reason and free-will, the means of performing that part of the modelling of intellectual nature, which he has been pleased to commit to them.

Out of such views can piety fail to arise? While the most effectual means are every where thus visibly at work, co-operating to produce the most benevolent of ends, is it possible not to feel a reverential consciousness of being in the actual presence of an awful, incomprehensible, all-pervading influence; an intelligent first cause; a God whose attributes are power, wisdom, and benevolence? Power, because nature is visibly under the dominion of laws—wisdom, because all those laws act in consort, tending to one great end—benevolence, because that one great end is the happiness, temporal and eternal, of all created beings. Comprehend thus, our God is no longer an invisible God—we see him every where!

With such views, shall we dare to deny to the labouring classes the cultivation of their reasoning powers? With such views, shall we dare to reduce the bulk of mankind, that wondrous apparatus, thus designed by benevolence, wisdom, and power,

for this mighty and eternal purpose, into mere temporal machinery, to minister to the passing purpose of our wants or our luxuries?

If this be not sacrilege, if this be not desecrating the vessels of the altar, and placing the tables of the money changers in the temple of the highest, where shall we seek the modern crimes which these offences typify? For if nature at large has been justly and beautifully styled the temple of God, is not intellectual nature the very altar of that temple?

Again, our being able to trace the formation of the moral sense to natural causes, therefore to causes ordained by the God of nature, is not only no objection to, but is the strongest possible proof of the divine origin, and therefore divine authority of the moral sense. For, had the moral sense been purely an instinct, of which, though conscious, we could not trace the rise or origin, we might have said, how do we know that this or that opinion is not a mere traditional precept, which, one time or other, had its rise in artificial circumstances, and which has been handed down from father to son, and so transmitted to us? But, when we see the opinion growing out of the natural organization and natural circumstances of man, which we know to be the work of God, we must know the opinion to be dictated by that God himself, who created the natural organization and ordained the natural circumstances!

FOURTH EXCEPTION OBIATED.

If it be still objected that there are portions of the material creation which, however beautiful or excellent, or conducive to present enjoyment, yet do not seem to convey any special moral lesson, it is replied, that every part of the abundance which nature is capable of yielding, even for the supply of the commonest necessities of food, raiment, and shelter, will be found, if duly considered, to be not only sources of temporary indulgence, claiming feelings of gratitude, but also portions of that natural revelation, which visibly commands that moral order shall be the means by which, not only temporal enjoyment, but that state of man's intellectual nature which constitutes susceptibility of eternal felicity shall be attained.

The justness of this assertion will become obvious on a simple reference to familiar facts. Who is there, for instance, who is not aware of the suffering and multiplied vices which invariably follow the want of production, and consequent scarcity of the necessities of life, attendant upon a want of industry, whether individual or national? Again, when industry does exist, and has produced, who has not seen and lamented the wide

spread wretchedness induced by an unjust distribution of the products of industry? Again, common daily experience teaches almost every human being that no one of the necessities, comforts, or means of the pleasures of life, however abundantly possessed, can be enjoyed without the observance of temperance in their use.

The same experience teaches that the contempt and hatred which men incur, as well as the violence they commit against the natural sympathies God has implanted in them, when they neglect the claims of helplessness, or yield to the unjust desires of selfishness, is always a price much higher than their unjust gains are worth.

Unfortunately, however, these views of the coincidence of virtue with self-interest, thus by God's ordination, taught for an immortal purpose, by the necessities of mortal life, are too generally considered in the light of mere worldly prudence, and fatally separated from religion; so that the too many who are unhappily wanting in knowledge of, or reverence for scriptural revelation, fancy themselves at liberty, when they please, to sacrifice prudent calculation to precarious gratification, promising themselves to balance accounts with themselves at some future period. But were all men taught from infancy to recognize in every intimation of God's will, thus given by natural revelation, that is, in every consequence following its cause, a command from

God, as direct as though they heard his voice, saying : be just, be kind, be industrious, be temperate, be forgiving, the sacredness of moral obligation could not fail of being so effectually felt as to be strictly acted upon. Every man, however unlearned he might be, in the common acceptance of the phrase, if taught thus much, would feel, whenever he infringed any law of moral order, perfectly certain that the natural consequences of his own act, which must follow, were the marks of the disapprobation of that God, who had ordained the connexion between causes and effects. In like manner, he would feel that the natural good consequences following upon a strict observance of moral order, were visible marks of God's approbation of moral order. And thus would every action be avoided or performed under the immediate sanction of sacred obligation ; that is of the known will of God, rendered awfully ascertained by the constant sense thus kept up of the actual presence, in every thing around us, of God's continually ruling, never to be resisted, never to be evaded power, made visible without special miracle, or partial judgment every time that effect follows cause ; every time, in short, that we trace nature obeying the commandments which she received from God when he laid the foundations of the universe. Thus, it is evident, without going into details, that were even the very lowest sources of common comfort neither neces-

sary to life, nor conducive to enjoyment, or that all men could always procure them all in abundance, without the exercise of any moral quality, whether industry, honesty, temperance, or aid of helplessness, practised either by themselves, or by any fellow being, many pages of the book of natural revelation would be wanting, in which we are now taught the rudiments of respect and admiration for moral qualities, without the exercise of which, it is evident, that the enjoyment of so much of what is necessary and agreeable to existence would be lost, or impaired, and on the other hand so much of suffering incurred.

Were these modes of practical instruction wanting, it is difficult to imagine on what foundation of natural experience reason could have erected the noble superstructure of the highest order of moral rectitude ; or by what means man could have discerned the will of his Maker, except in scriptural revelation ; so that all who had not that revelation, would have been in total darkness : which, considering how many have been, and still are, without the word, would assuredly not have been in accordance with either the goodness or the justice of God, who, had scripture revelation been the only revelation of his will, would certainly have provided that scriptural revelation, like natural revelation, should have been distinctly offered to the inward feelings and outward perceptions, of every individual human being on whom God has bestowed the gift of reason,

and this from the first hour of the world's creation to the present day. Thus, then, it is true, in the fullest sense of the proposition (unless we be of the number of those who will not see with their eyes, hear with their ears, neither understand with their hearts), that we may trace in all the phenomena of mind and matter, benevolence, wisdom, and power, visibly omnipresent, willing, planning, and executing the extension of felicity, temporal and eternal, by means of moral order. For, again, the whole of this series of arguments goes to prove, in the most complete and satisfactory manner, that the ulterior purpose of creation is the preparation of the intellectual part of man's nature for some future state of being, in which will be called into use, not only every sympathy induced by the helplessness and wants of mortal life, but also all the moral rectitude and philanthropic benevolence, first awakened, and finally established into principles, by the absolute necessity for practising the virtues of moral order, which that helplessness, and the common wants of our mortal nature, point out to reason.

The truth of this proposition will appear by reflecting that, if the sympathies and the moral sense which the natural helplessness and wants of mortal life are calculated to induce, were only intended to remedy that helplessness, and make provision for those wants, that helplessness and those wants would never have formed portions of the order of

God's providence ; for that power which formed this admirable provision to aid that helplessness, and supply those wants, could as easily have made creatures independent of mutual aid, and having no wants, or have rendered nature so prolific, that the supply of every want should always be found beneath the hand of him who felt the want, without the exercise of industry, honesty, generosity, temperance, or any other virtue of moral order, either on his own part, or on that of any fellow being. The sympathies and the moral virtues, then, thus evidently not having been ordained to remedy the helplessness, and supply the wants, but the helplessness and the wants having been ordained to create the sympathies and the moral virtues, we have a clear demonstration that those sympathies, and those moral virtues are intended for an ulterior purpose, independent of that of remedying the temporary inconveniences, which we clearly perceive were only ordained to produce the moral virtues. Whatever, therefore, may be the ultimate and eternal purpose for which the Almighty, in his counsels, intends the moral sense of man, it is quite self-evident, that to produce and perfect that moral sense for some purpose ulterior to the necessities of mortal life, was the purpose for which this world was created, and the whole course of God's providence, in all the arrangements of mortal life ordained.

FIFTH EXCEPTION OBVIATED.

Neither is it any argument against the divine authority of the moral sense, or the evidence, thence drawn, that God has willed the extension of felicity by means of moral order, to say that different standards of a supposed right and wrong have obtained, and do obtain, in different ages and countries. After the view we have just taken of the manner in which the moral sense is produced, and modified, and of the uniform character of that moral sense which the nature and natural circumstances of man, are calculated to induce, these diversities only prove, that the means with which God has furnished man, for perfecting the moral sense, have been, in those different ages and countries, (from various degrees of the abuse of free-will) more or less neglected, or misused; and, also, that the artificial circumstances of such ages and countries, have, by further abuses of free-will, been so distorted, as to warp in its after stages, that uniformity of the moral sense, of which God has laid the foundation in the nature and natural circumstances of man. Had the institutions which are under the control of free-will, in other words, the artificial social relations of all ages and countries, been framed after the pattern which God has vouchsafed us in his organization of the natural social system, that is, with

a view to giving the same good-will and moral order producing direction to the sympathies and associations, which the natural social relations arranged by God himself, are calculated to induce ; and that the comparing power of reason had been universally cultivated, and when cultivated universally applied to the purpose for which it was given—that is, to superintending the formation of those associations, and confirming them into principles, the uniformity of opinion on what constitutes a just moral sense must have been absolute ! The various approaches to a justice, good-will, and moral order producing organization of the artificial social system, and the various degrees in which the reasoning powers are cultivated, and, when cultivated applied to the great purpose for which they were given, produce the various degrees of approximation to truth which obtain.

But, let it be observed, (for the fact, itself undeniable, furnishes a triumphant proof of the divine origin, and therefore divine authority of the moral sense), that the conclusions necessary to produce the same moral sense in every human being on whom God has bestowed the gift of reason, are not only derivable from a train of reasoning on man's own nature and natural circumstances, at which, therefore, all who reason on that nature and those circumstances, must arrive ; but are founded on principles so simple, and deduced from primary facts so demonstrable, that they are ca-

pable of being broken down into separate propositions, the truth of each of which, singly stated, the simplest minds can comprehend ; and to the truth of each of which, singly stated, even the most obstinately prejudiced cannot refuse their assent. It follows, therefore, that the conclusions thus essential to the formation of that just moral sense, which is God's great instrument for the production of happiness temporal and eternal, are such as all men, without requiring more than the average rate of ability, can either form for themselves, or be led to form by the reasoning of others.

And why are those conclusions thus necessary and natural to reason ? Because the uniformity of the moral sense has its foundation in that part of the course of nature, which God has placed under the dominion of his own absolute laws, unchangeable by man's free-will ; its diversities, in the after biases received from those artificial circumstances which abuses of free-will can render unfavourable. When, therefore, the organization of the artificial social system is such as to counteract, as much as possible, the sympathy and moral order producing natural circumstances of man, and that reason is not used to restore the bent of nature—prejudices, especially if they be national prejudices, assume the guise of opinions ; and these mental deformities, produced by abuses of free-will, are offered as proofs that the moral

sense has no natural stature. The branches forcibly trained to the wall in opposite, parallel directions, are absurdly displayed to show that the tree, not so coerced, would not have grown upright ! And, by way of argument, it is added that it was as easy to bend the branches on the one side, as on the other, while the simple fact is over-looked, that it would have been still easier to have assisted their natural tendency to shoot upward ! But, whether a man be, by this forced false training of unjust artificial circumstances, a Turk, a cannibal, a conqueror, a heathen savage who sacrifices his children at the shrine of Devils, or a prejudiced, though nominal christian statesman, pension-holder, land-owner, or monopolist, who immolates the labouring classes of his fellow men on the altars of pride or self-defeating selfishness ; a process of calm reasoning on his own nature and natural circumstances, may any moment irresistably open his eyes, and give him that just moral sense, which God has ordained shall be the product of such application of the reasoning powers. This, however, being the bourn from whence no mental traveller returns, there is no process of false reasoning, no exposition of false theories, which could possibly lead back into blind and monstrous superstitions, or miserably short sighted selfishness, the mind which had once beheld the broad line of eternal separation, which God himself has drawn between

natural right, and unnatural wrong!!! Is not this then sufficient to prove the conclusions thus obtained to be Eternal truth itself? What is truth?

In relation to man, at least, truth undoubtedly is that system of moral opinions which, though it may be missed by not reasoning, or by misapplying reason, every reasoning being who follows out the obvious train of deductions suggested by the facts of his own nature and natural circumstances, must be led to form; but which, no reasoning being who has once so formed, can ever again be led to reject.

Thus, it may be safely asserted, that whatever man can get at, by the cultivation of the reason which God has given him, and its application to a contemplation of the works of God, is a portion of God's own declaration of his will, revealed directly from God himself, to each creature on whom he has bestowed the gift of reason. While this, so far from encouraging every man to set up a separate standard of right and wrong for himself, lays uniformity in at the very foundations of opinion: for, the premises being the visible works of God himself, and, therefore, always the same, the conclusions at which they always point, must also always be the same; and thus all men, but those who attempt to jump to their conclusions, or who seek them through some other premises but the works of God, must always arrive at the same conclusion. Nay, this very uniformity of

opinion, is a part of Gods' visibly revealed will : for God, by giving all men the same reason to reason with, and the same premises to reason from, has done every thing, but withdraw free-will, to make all men reason alike !

INFERENCES DRAWN.

Having traced, in the whole course of nature, especially the nature and natural circumstances of man, both God's purpose, the extension of felicity, and his will that such felicity shall be attained by means of moral order ; and seen that all nature, except free-will abused, obeys the laws of God, we necessarily infer, that whenever cultivated reason shall clearly see, and seeing incline free-will to co-operate with this visible revelation of God's will, both in the conduct of private life, and in the organization of the artificial social system, the harmony of creation shall be completed, the moral sense and good-will producing sympathies perfected, and the happiness here, and susceptibility for enjoying felicity hereafter, which God has ordained shall result from the perfection of moral order, shall become the portion of all God's rational creatures.

Hence, again, we as necessarily infer, that to organize the artificial social system, on the moral order and good-will producing model of the natural social system, is the duty of all communities to

themselves, and of all governments to the communities they govern ; and that to promote the cultivation of the reasoning powers of every human being on whom God has bestowed the gift of reason, and to direct the application of those powers, to a clear comprehension of the laws of moral order, or the social science in all its branches, as visibly revealed in the works of God, is a duty of sacred obligation on all associated beings.

The question then comes to be—What is a moral order and good-will producing organization of the artificial social system ?

Will all mankind, or can all mankind feel good-will to all in direct obedience to God's commandment of good-will to all ? Without the use of those means which God has given for the special purpose of training and perfecting the moral sense ; in other words, of deciding the choice of free-will in favour of the practice of those virtues which generate good-will, and consequently produce happiness here, and susceptibility of felicity hereafter.

But, as there are not a few well meaning persons, who would dispute the use of reason as a means of acquiring any virtue acceptable to their Maker, and who, in their erroneous zeal, exclaim : “ Humble human reason ; lay it in the dust ; it is sufficient for man to obey ; ”—it will be necessary, before we proceed further, to meet

this objection by endeavouring to show, that the madman, who in the conduct of the ordinary affairs of life, should shut out the rays of the sun, and lay him down in darkness awaiting a supernatural illumination, by the help of which to perform his daily avocations, would not be more mistaken than the man whose misjudging piety is alarmed at the mention of reason, that sun of the intellectual horizon, that emanation of God's own spirit, that highest gift of God, as a guide to truth, or to that moral order, generating goodwill, which that very reason recognises to be the visibly revealed will of God: miscalling such use of reason "presumption," or "self-trust;" as though that self, they deem it humility to despise, were not the work of God; as though the gift of reason, they deem it presumption to use, were not as much a gift from God, as the gift of grace they deem it humility to implore; as though the gift of reason were not a gift of grace offered to all; as though the gift of reason, applied to tracing the will of God, and inclining free-will to co-operate with that will, were not the very spirit of God himself, "working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure;" as though true humility of spirit were not rather shown in diligently using the means which God has given, for the end which God has ordained, than in rejecting, or despising such, and demanding, or awaiting, in a species of, at least, passive resist-

ance of God's will, a further gift. Nay, do we not blaspheme when we pronounce God's gift of reason useless, and insolently call upon him, as it were, to amend his own imperfect work, and give us a further gift of grace? Yet, such is the desperate presumption of mistaken piety!!!

That this unreasoning obedience, however, is not the "reasonable service" called for in scriptural revelation, is abundantly proved by the promises of reward, and denunciations of punishment proclaimed in scripture; for these must be allowed by all who believe scripture to be the word of God, to be appeals of God's word to the reasoning or comparing powers of man.

If then it be granted, that reason may be used for the promotion of good-will to all; that reason will point out that the general prevalence of good-will among men must be preceded by the establishment, enforced by law or general consent, of equal justice as a means; because, however necessary our reason may acknowledge love or good-will to be to happiness, love or good-will, in other words, those amiable sympathies to which the natural social system gives birth, and which a favourable organization of the artificial social system would perfect, not being within the power of volition, we cannot by reasoning persuade, nor yet by the most anxious desire to obey, constrain ourselves, and each other to feel love one towards another; but we may—nay, must by

reasoning arrive at the conclusion, and therefore may by reasoning also lead others to the conclusion, that our own nature and natural circumstances prove it to be the will of God, and for the comfort and security of all associated beings, to practice, and unite the common strength of all to enforce equal justice ; and that while justice is still imperfect, and that therefore offences still exist, that it is equally the will of God, because equally essential to the happiness of all associated beings, that we should refrain from retaliating wrong received, rather than by giving way to resentment, perpetuate the reciprocation of injury. When these peace and harmony producing principles are established, and a cessation from the perpetual provocations of injustice thus obtained, the embers of ill-will, like fire without fuel, will die out, whilst the kindling of the kindly affections must, as naturally and certainly as any other effect follows its cause, arise towards beings from whom we derive, and on whom we bestow, by the ordination of our universal Father, for the very purpose of originating mutual good-will, all that is necessary, convenient, and desirable to life and comfort ; as well as from whom we derive, and on whom we bestow, by the same ordination, and for the same purpose, all the more refined pleasures flowing from the highest and noblest sympathies of our nature :—sources of felicity, the existence of which it is vain for the coarse and selfish to deny, as long as the exalting and har-

monizing influence of such sympathies is felt, even partially within the private sanctuary of the family circle ; where, fostered by the endearing ties of the natural social system, the sacred fire of social love has been produced, and is being preserved, that the soul of man, though confounded through ages by those frightful abuses of free-will, wars, superstitions, persecutions, and the ceaseless provocations of injustice ; might not be left without a witness of what love is ; and whence, when equal justice shall prevail, and the light of a reasoning education founded on the visible, as well as written will of God, has been extended to all on whom God has bestowed the gift of reason, its ameliorating influence shall expand, and becoming good-will to all, ensure the fulfilment of the Almighty purpose :—namely, the limitless extension of felicity, temporal and eternal.

It will perhaps be objected, that though eternal felicity may be secured by virtuous conduct, that temporal happiness cannot. The objection, however, is not valid ; for few, very few indeed, are the unavoidable ills of life, that is, those not occasioned, directly or indirectly, by abuses of free-will, individual or collective. While, were all mankind the reasoning, sympathizing, practically religious beings that a rational education, and a favourable organization of the artificial social system would make them, the few ills that were unavoidable, would be surrounded by so many alleviations, and prove the

fruitful sources of so much good-will and so many kindly and delightful feelings, both of benevolence and of gratitude, that the question would come to be, whether, taken in connexion with these expanded views of all their consequences, immediate and collateral, such seeming alloys to happiness might not, with propriety, be ranked almost among the blessings of existence!

The justness of the proposition that few would be the ills of life, did the free-will of man, individual and collective, co-operate with the good-will of God, must fully appear, if it be but remembered, what are the abuses of free-will; if it be but remembered, that without abuses of free-will there could be no warfare, no want, no robbery, no murder, no cheating, no lying, no indolence, no intemperance, no penury, no extravagance, no assumption of undelegated, no abuse of delegated power, no obstructions in the path of industry, no exactions on the fruits of labour, no taxes on first necessities, no taxes on knowledge, no monopolies, no exclusions, no unjust or ill-will-producing institutions of any kind, no luxury, no vice, no ignorance, no crime, no insolent pride, no mortified feeling, no injuries, no resentments, in short, no ungoverned passions whatever. And let not the habitually vicious or the habitually thoughtless, with a cold sneer, or a careless laugh, pronounce these the wild imaginings of a visionary! It will not surely be asserted, that there never yet

was one human mind which, by reason and practical religion, was lifted out of selfishness, and exalted above the possibility of finding in vice so much as a temptation to become her votary. Nay, it will rather be readily confessed, that there have been many such; and that, with the progress of knowledge and practical views of religious obligation, their numbers (despite the baneful influence of frightfully unjust artificial social systems) are continually increasing. We have then the witness of facts, that God has placed such attainments within the reach of free-will; and, if within the reach of the free-will of one, within the reach of the free-will of all. Whilst, as has been already shown, a just or good-will-producing organization of the artificial social system; and the universal diffusion of a reasoning, or practically religious education, are the only human means of co-operating with the visible will of God, namely, the extension of felicity, temporal and eternal, by means of moral order.

Yet, the unjust few who have long revelled in superfluous abundance, wrung from the less than justly rewarded labour of the many; delighted with their own position, call upon us to "respect," merely because it is of long standing, that now, it is to be devoutly hoped, mouldering fabric, by means of the once formidable fortifications of which they have, time immemorial, been enabled to wrong the many in security, nay, with auda-

cious confidence in the yet remaining rampart of partial ignorance ; and the, as yet, but partially drained off moat of corruption, they dare to call the perpetuity of that wrong “ the safety of the nation ! ” You say, they plead, “ you will only remove the injustice ; but, if you do, you must pull down the building ! ”—Does the building then stand upon injustice ?—“ Look back upon the history of the world,” they sagely continue, “ there always has been injustice, therefore, it is quite clear that there always ought to be injustice ! ”

Again—when education for the many is pleaded for by the friends of reason, religion, and humanity ; the same selfish few, finding in the mass of their fellow men an immense power of living machinery, ministering daily, self-moved, to their luxurious wants, will not perceive that even all this would be better done by reasoning beings, but, dreading all change, cry : “ We did very well in the days of our grandmothers, before educating the multitude was so much as thought of ! ” Let us then leave the bulk of the people (as we have always done) to tread the roughest paths of life in darkness, and hang those that stumble, as a warning to the rest to step more carefully ! Besides, are they not expressly told, from our pulpits every Sunday, not to stumble ; what occasion then can they have for light ?

And then we say : God gave no moral sense ; look at the depravity of man ! As well might we

say: God gave no bread; look at the sterility of the earth, because our loaves fall not from the clouds like the manna of the wilderness!

If the earth must be cultivated before bread can be eaten, so must that seed of the spirit of God in man (the power of reasoning) before happiness can be enjoyed.

If men have hitherto been depraved, what does it prove? That man, without a more universally diffused cultivation, and a more practically moral application of his reasoning powers, than has ever yet obtained, is, by such abuse of free-will, reduced to the most imperfect of God's works, being, when thus wronged of reason, a portion only of a compound creature, rendered, by this wilful mutilation of its intended nature, at once the most helpless and the most mischievous animal in creation, necessarily furnished with insufficient instincts, because destined to possess a better guide.

Had God intended, as the blinded by selfishness, uncorrected by reason, would have us mad enough to believe, that certain classes of men, destined to perform certain laborious avocations, should use only their physical powers, and live and die without calling the mental faculties into play, would it not have been strictly analogous to the whole course of God's providence, to have created orders of beings without reason, but, from the hour of their birth, perfect, by instinct, in agriculture, architecture,

and manufactures, as the bée in the preparation of honey and construction of honey-comb, or the spider in the weaving of its web? But God has evidently created one order only of men, by giving reason, on the average, equally to all the artificially distinguished ranks of men : he has even made the use of a portion of that reason necessary to the discovery of the common arts indispensable to subsistence, evidently to suggest to man, that the higher moral attainments must also be sought through the instrumentality of reason.

The mere fact, however, of God's having bestowed reason on all men,* is in itself a sufficient revelation of his will that all men should cultivate their reason. For, surely, it is impossible, for a single moment, to suppose that God, who does nothing in vain, has bestowed on millions, and tens of millions of beings, that bright, that precious emanation of his own spirit, that mysterious seed of intellectual nature, which constitutes the power of becoming a reasoning, sympathizing, benevolent, immortal being, to be returned back to him on the great day of judgment, like the talent of the unprofitable servant, undeveloped.

But the will of God in this, as in all things else, is not only revealed in his works, but that revela-

* It is not thought necessary here to notice the cases of madmen or idiots. No one ever thought of arguing that God did not intend mankind to see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, because there are unhappy instances of blindness and of deafness.

tion confirmed by the continual course of his providence : that is, by the obedience of all things, but free-will, to his laws ; or, in other words, the order in which effects follow their causes, as ordained by the Creator when he laid the foundation of the universe ! Is not this revelation to be found in the records of the past ? Are not the frightful features of history painted in blood ? Is not their distorted expression a display of human misery terrible to look upon ? Yet, almost the whole of which, a little reflection proves, might have been not only avoided, but its place supplied by much happiness, had all mankind always reasoned on the nature and natural circumstances of man, and thence inferring the will of God, perceived what artificial circumstances their free-will was invited by his mercy and loving kindness to choose.

Are not these momentous facts as visible a revelation to the very commonest capacities, that it is the will of God that man shall cultivate his reason, and, guided by that reason, his moral sense and good-will-producing sympathies, by means of good-will-inducing institutions and habits, before he can reap that happiness which is the rich harvest of moral order, as the thistle-grown surface of the earth, without culture, is of God's will that man shall cultivate the ground before he can eat bread ? This latter revelation we are unanimous in practically acknowledging the necessity for obeying : we see nearly the whole world, with one accord,

ploughing, and sowing, and reaping, and gathering into barns ! We never hear of famines produced by faith without works on this vital point ! The “early and the latter rain,” ’tis true, and the fructifying dew, and the vivifying sun, are looked for with undoubting faith, but not expected to ripen the grain that was never sown. But, obedience to the former, or moral, and surely not less important revelation, we seem to consider optional, and to cultivate the intellectual faculties (when we cultivate them at all), as matter of amusement, or of ornament, rather than of a necessity founded in that nature which God has given to us, and therefore of sacred obligation : thus acting as though we were unconscious that reason is that portion of the spirit, or grace of God which is offered to all, for the purpose of inclining free-will, on conviction, to choose moral order : that neglect of this cultivation, and this application of reason, is contempt and rejection of the spirit of God, or, in scripture language, the grace of God : and that the diligent cultivation of reason, and its application to this great moral purpose, when founded on a conviction that such is the will of God, is obedient acceptance of that series of gracious scripture invitations which says : “Ask and it shall be given to you ; seek and ye shall find ; knock and it shall be opened unto you.” Or, in other words, use the means which God has given, in a full confidence that, inasmuch as God is powerful, wise, and benevolent, the provisions of

his providence, if all used, and honestly used, must be all-sufficient. If it be argued that the labouring many have not time to render this "reasonable service" to their Maker, and that they therefore must be told the sum total of their duty by the few who study it for them, it is asked : Are the few to be trusted with this office ? Will they not frame what they choose to call the duty of the many to suit their own purposes ? Will they not instruct the many that the whole duty of men in their humble station is to pay rents, taxes, and tithes ; to work hard, though for the benefit of others ; to suffer no extremity of want to tempt them to demand higher wages, or cheaper food, or by any other means, however legal or peaceable, seek to recover any particle of the luxurious stores of superabundant comforts, which, though created by themselves, have, by the operation of mysterious causes, into which they have no business to inquire, been transferred to the few ; and though, in consequence, they should be without food, shelter, or raiment, to be perfectly contented with their lot, and believe the glorious British Constitution faultless ?

If, however, the few were beings of incorruptible integrity, or that they had neither motive, nor temptation to deceive the many ; still it must be remembered that God gave reason to all men, because he would have the cordial co-operation with his will, of free-will inclined by convinced reason, not the worthless obedience of constraint

or the conforming movements of mere puppets ; else he had not given free-will ! Shall man assume a power which God has spared to use ? Shall man crush the undeveloped seed of reason in his fellow men, that he may ensnare the freedom of their will, and make them the unconscious puppets of his purposes ? That he may be, as it were, the one animating spirit to myriads of human forms, thus made subservient to his will.

Nay, has not the impious, the unnatural experiment, been tried for upwards of five thousand years, and have not its constant results proved that, while knowledge (which is power) is confined to the few, and these few continue to be less perfect in wisdom, justice, and benevolence, than the God who made them, the many must continue, even in their temporal concerns, to be miserable. For how imperfect soever that knowledge must be, which lends itself to work evil, yet, over total ignorance, even despicable cunning is absolute power !

Now, absolute power, perfect wisdom, and boundless benevolence, are the inseparable, and (because inseparable,) felicity-producing attributes of the deity.

But when presumptuous man with his finite grasp, which cannot reach the perfect wisdom, neither compass the boundless benevolence, dares to seize upon a fragment of the power, and wield it, maniac like over the destinies of his fellow men, how wild

and terrible is the havoc he commits, how fearful the responsibility he incurs !

Did the many, however, know how to choose happiness, in other words, did they reason on their own nature and natural circumstances, and thence inferring the will of God, and tracing the coincidence between that will and their own happiness ; perceive what artificial circumstances their free-will was called upon to choose ; it is manifest that they, having the physical force on their side, the few could not compel them to choose poverty, degradation, sin, and blood-shed ; in preference to peace on earth and good-will among men, with the enjoyment of the fruits of their own labour, that labour lightened by the judicious co-operation of the whole family of man, and of every climate and soil upon earth, together with the use of every discovery in machinery, and in all the useful arts and sciences. It is, therefore, by subtlety only, that the many could ever have been induced to sacrifice themselves to the unjust desires of the few. Yet, that they have so sacrificed themselves, from the creation of the world to the present hour, is a fact known to the whole world. If it be clear then that they could not have been compelled to do so, and have done so, therefore, only through ignorance, it must be equally clear that the only way to prevent their doing so in future, is to furnish them with knowledge.

On that frightful topic, war, for instance, how

have all the nations of the earth, from time to time, drank deep of the maddening draughts administered to their helpless ignorance by the subtlety of the selfish few, seeking aggrandisement, extent of territory, or fancied fame for cruel and wicked exploits, at the expense of the peace and lives of thousands. Or, when the frenzy of devastating conquest is not the motive, how inexpressibly more abhorrent to human nature, are the cold-blooded calculations of the demon-hearted statesman who intrigues for war, and, sitting in his closet, moves the fatal spring that sends forth peaceful nations to massacre each other; solely that the minds of the many may be too much occupied to discern the rights of man in the will of God, and that, therefore, oppressive taxes may be paid without a murmur.

We review, with just horror, the privileged few of ancient days, looking on while gladiators fought, and finding amusement in the spectacle. We, of the present day have, 'tis true, no gladiators, but we have armies; and they are maintained, not always to fight in defence of the state—that is of the people's rights—but too often in defence of wrong, wherever right dares to lift her head, and ask for her own. The privileged few of modern times, do not sit by, and for amusement, look on, while these armies fight; but do they not send forth their tens of thousands of ignorant and deluded human beings, born to be brethren,

and to love and aid each other ; armed and led on ; drilled and disciplined to commit murders by hundreds within the moment, at the word of command (good Heavens ! did God give the power of speech for such a purpose ?) and then, with the taxes collected on the pretext of consummating this hideous purpose, (surely in itself sufficiently diabolical,) do not they—the modern, the civilized, the nominally christian few—purchase pomps, splendours, titles, luxuries ; all, in short, which they choose to consider in better taste, than looking on while gladiators fight ? Thus the death-struggles of one or two fellow-creatures supplied the savage sport of the ancient few ; but thousands perish in an hour ; whole provinces are laid waste, and nations groan for successive centuries under industry, paralysing, and starvation-producing taxation, to provide the more refined gratifications of the modern few !!!

Could these things be, if all men reasoned ? Could any of these things be, if all men reasoned on their own nature and natural circumstances, and so learned to perceive the will of God, and the coincidence between their own best interests, and that will ?

Yet, as what calls itself education is now conducted, the few are diligently made worse than ignorant ; being from their cradles imbued with forced false associations, but too welcome to selfishness ; and sent into life, blinded by deep

rooted prejudices, teaching them to believe the monstrous, and blasphemous falsehood, that for them, the few, and their children, from generation to generation, to prey upon the many, and their children, from generation to generation, is a part of the order of nature, as prescribed by its benevolent author. And, as though this were not enough, a certain portion of this, thus judiciously educated few, go forth, by virtue of the boasted British constitution, the unchosen, hereditary legislators of the land; vested with the legal power of firing upon, or hanging, (backed by an enormously expensive standing army, officered by their own relatives, but paid out of the labour of the many,) all who resist their exactions, together with the further power of annulling any law, not pleasing to themselves, attempted to be made by the other division of the legislature; whilst even that other division, though nominally chosen by the many, the many are, by the law of property qualification, compelled to choose from among the remaining portion of the falsely educated few, or property union; the many, the while, (except an attempt on the part of the highly paid relatives of the few, the clergy, to teach them the one lesson of submission to all this) being left totally uninstructed, to the fatal influence of the ill-will-producing circumstances of a miserably unjust organization of the artificial social system; by the operation of which, the idle few, with their hosts

of non-productive, that is, merely ostentatious or personal attendants ; and multitudes of equally non-productive pampered animals, kept for show, and domestic ones, maintained for amusement ; all live, in the most wasteful luxury, unenjoyed from its very excess, (for even the lap dogs of the property union lack appetite) on the hard labour of the industrious many, millions of whom are themselves insufficiently fed, and scarcely clothed or housed at all ; and all of whom are most irrationally, and ungratefully despised by those whose comforts, splendours, and luxuries, they live but to create.

This again, is the glorious British constitution ! Yet it is better than any other, except that of America. What wonder, then, that evil is triumphant ! Nor will any remedy, or remedies avail thoroughly, but in conjunction with the practical application of real religion, freed from fanaticism, to its great moral and rational purpose, namely, the production of a universal co-operation with the good-will of God—of the free-will of man, instructed and convinced by cultivated reason.

How much then have they to answer for, (the self-styled learned) who, while contending with unchristian fierceness for the interpretation of tortured phrases, and the explanation of mysteries too high for man, which, not being necessary to the conduct of life, God has not been pleased to place within the reach of mortal ken, have left

the unlearned in all the helplessness of their ignorance, to suppose that it is the truth itself which is matter of doubt; till pure morality, thus fatally deprived of its sacred sanction, is divorced from what calls itself religion; and the vesture of holiness, which was woven without a seam throughout, being thus forcibly rent in twain; the one part appears a vague abstraction without an object; the other, a system of restraints unenforced by any sufficient sanction; and both, therefore, are by too many bold spirits flung aside, and utterly forgotten. Whilst others, timid and well-meaning, but unreasoning beings, choose, what seems to them the better, because the easier part; and, from the cradle to the grave, lull their every faculty, and paralyse their every energy, by partaking copiously of that dangerous moral opiate—faith without works.

If instead of either of these monstrous errors, very babes and sucklings were instructed to repeat the simple, practical, precepts of the word; and as their understandings opened, given, for the only expositors of that word, the works of God, and his attributes and purposes, from his works inferred, the contemplation of truths thus sublime and unchangeable, yet made visible, must, ere long, teach the whole world to know that “Faith without Works is dead indeed:” and that, if there be a blasphemy in faith, distinct from works, it must consist, not in doubting, but in believing

any dogma which ascribes to the Great Author of all, the beauty, order, and harmony of nature, decrees or purposes, incompatible with his own revelation of himself, visible in all his works ! Remembering always, that what unreasoning, therefore irreligious men, call the prudence of experience, is entitled to a higher sanction, and a better name—for, that effects necessarily following their natural causes, as ordained by the Author of Nature, is the language in which God, from his throne in Heaven, addresses the dwellers upon earth ; and therefore, that the reverential noting of these causes and effects with a view to the direction of conduct, is an essential part of reasonable, practical religion.

Again, how much have they to answer for (the self-styled holy) who by their love of worldly gain, and worldly pomp, have brought all that is holy, just, and true, with too many, into absolute disrepute, changed the church of “ good will,” into the church of Rathcormac ; and reduced all the “ law and the prophets” to two new commandments—“ pay the greater tithe,” and “ pay the lesser tithe !” Of thus much, then, all men and nations may rest assured, that, until the ministers of the gospel of peace not only cease to be high priests of Mammon and princes of this world, but until they become, both in spirit and in letter, the humble, lowly, brothers and companions of their congregations, neither possessing, nor desiring

riches, nor yet influence, save that which merited respect should bestow, they will, like the Pharisees of old, stand in the gate-way of heaven, neither going in themselves, nor suffering those that would go in to enter.

But, with a favourable organization of the artificial social system this right use of reason, namely, its application to the discovery of real religious obligation, founded on a faith as remote from fanaticism, as from scepticism, and producing manners as far removed from asceticism, as from libertinism, would not be the arduous task it now is. The Herculean labour of those who have hitherto attempted to reason has consisted chiefly in unriveting the links of forced false associations. Whenever reason shall have but to confirm the good-will-producing associations of a justly organized social system, and by its approbation give them the stability of principles, men will not need to be philosophers to recognize truth !

“ It may be all very well in the closet, but will never do in real life :” is the common, irrational, yet triumphantly urged argument, with which men of the world meet all abstract truth, that they feel to be incontrovertible, and which, if applied to practice would, in its straight forward course, cross the path of their prejudices. Is not this a miserable confession, that mankind, as artificial social systems are at present organized, are generally engaged in counteracting instead of co-

operating with the visibly revealed will of the Creator, in the immutable laws of creation, and that, therefore, though reflecting individuals find in the sympathies, and the reason, which God has given them, a measure for their speculations, they can find no guide for their conduct, that will not cause them to jostle against those with whom they ought to be happily, and smoothly journeying. Yet this too, is dishonestly made a weapon against the truth, although involving the absurdities, that differing from existing wrong, is a proof of being wrong, and that immutable truth, to prove herself practical truth, should mould her form to, and become the obsequious imitator of every Proteus shape assumed by folly, or by chance. Thus, theorists are attempted to be laughed down; while theory, we are told, with a ludicrous affectation of wisdom, is a very different thing from practice. Should practice then have no guide? It has the guide of experience, say the opponents of theory. But we have already seen that experience, rationally and religiously understood, is the warning voice of Him, whose decrees have fixed the indissoluble connexion between causes and their effects. Yet, by those who call themselves practical men, in opposition to theorists, though experience prove the practice wrong, it is persevered in; and our former errors, under the title of precedents, gravely made our future dictators! This propensity, however, though

much abused, has its origin in truth, for the standard of right and wrong, both ought to be, and is immutable; and man, therefore, notwithstanding his progressive state of being, must look back, to see his way into futurity! But, let him not look back, merely to a stage in that progress, which himself has left behind—let him rather look back to that utmost point which can be reached by mental vision; and tracing the originating principle of all things, in the benevolence of God, examine, with all his powers of reason, the organization of the natural social system; and, in its tendency to generate good-will-inducing sympathies, and to produce felicity by means of moral order, recognise that only unchanging precedent by which, while the frame of nature holds, the free-will of man, is invited by the good-will of God, to model the theory of every law, regulation, and institution, effecting the organization of the artificial social system, and therefore, the happiness, temporal and eternal, of all associated beings.

Not only, therefore, should the reasoning powers of all men, in all ranks, be cultivated, but those powers, so cultivated, applied to the study of the social science in all its branches, public as well as private! The social duties of private life, none deny to be the concern of all, while those who recognize the happiness of man to be the will of God, and discern conformity to that will, to be both the duty and the interest of man, must perceive, that even

to withhold a kindly smile, or to infuse uncalled for harshness into the tone of the voice, is a wanton infringement of the social duties, and therefore, of the will of God. But why, it may be asked, should all men study those branches of the social science connected with legislation? all men are not destined to be legislators! The reply is simply this—because all men must command, obey, or disobey. Now, though God himself, in organizing our bodily frames, and our natural relations, has given us, independent of free-will, the foundations of our sympathies, our reason, and our first associations, he has committed to free-will the organization of the artificial social system, on which depends our after-associations, and, consequently, the perfecting of those sympathies, and the cultivation, and application of that reason. Those who command, therefore, having especially in their hands the organization of the artificial social system, have to perform functions in the modification of mind, second only to those of the Almighty himself! While those who obey, give force to the commands of those who command; and, again, those who disobey, break the force of command: it is necessary, therefore, for every member of the whole family of man, to comprehend the tendency of every institution, which forms any portion of the artificial social system under which he lives, as well as the fundamental distinction between bad and good government; that, neither by commanding nor obeying,

he may be guilty of enforcing injustice, nor yet by disobeying, of depriving justice of due force !

In a representative government, also like that of Great Britain, where every individual on whom God has bestowed the gift of reason, and who has cultivated that gift, is, or ought to be, in spirit a member of the government, in virtue of his vote, freely given in the choice of his representative : if he has no opinions on the subject of government, how shall he be truly represented ? and, still worse, what shall preserve him from being purchased ? If he have selfish, party, or, in any way, biased opinions, his being truly represented will be injurious to the cause of truth. It is clear, therefore, that the happiness of man will never be in safe keeping till every human being (possessed of reason) is taught to know in what good government consists, and this done (though not till this be done) that suffrage ought to be universal !

The important suffrage of public opinion, also, how is that to be rendered both just and uniform, and therefore effectual, but by rendering a knowledge of all that regards the well-being of associated man universal ?

Wherefore is it, that with a population of twenty-five millions of people, we have hitherto had no effectual public opinion ? Because, hitherto, each particular class, order, trade, manufacture, etc. has thought only, of what it has been artfully

taught to consider, its own particular interests. Thus, in the wretched scramble of self-defeating selfishness, absurdly denominated the nice balancing of interests, while the rights of all are being trampled beneath the feet of the struggling competitors for more than justice, and every portion of the public, clamours for that which to grant would be injustice to every other portion, their conflicting claims can but resemble the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel, and operate to defeat the purposes of all !

No wonder this nice balancing of every other interest, which, during the triumphant reign of the interest of dishonesty, so long enabled the enemies of the people, and therefore of God, to turn, if not with a feather, literally with a ribbon or a garter, the great scales of truth and justice into a lie, no wonder this convenient, this easily upset balance, this paralysing of every influence in the nation but that of corruption, constituted and constitutes, in the eyes of both the corrupted and the corrupting, a glorious constitution ! Let us hear no more then, (from honest men at least) of nicely balanced interests ; but let the standard of public morality be raised to that of equal justice : in short, let all unite with all, in requiring justice for all, and no more than justice for themselves, and the sovereignty of public opinion shall be established, and the voice of the people become, without a

paradox, the voice of God. For, be it remembered, that it is only while public opinion is itself misjudging, misinformed, or not informed at all, that misrule obtains. May legislators, then innocently await the formation, and manifestation of a uniform public opinion, before they have any duties to perform? Certainly not. If the question could be answered in the affirmative, such answer would pronounce legislators useless encumbrances, and the machinery of legislation, a vast expenditure of the public money without a legitimate object.

Also, for an enlightened and unanimous public opinion to obtain unaided, in the first instance, by a favourable organization of the artificial social system, many precious years might yet be lost in individual efforts to dispel the mists of ignorance : and when those mists were at length dispelled, a struggle, though ultimately a successful one, might still await the cause of honesty. Let then, whosoever may be in authority when these lines shall meet their eye, if they would be the benefactors of mankind ; if they would accelerate, perhaps by ages, the advent of virtue and felicity ; if they would be the vice-gerents of Almighty benevolence ; if they would not ignobly wait to follow in the train of the glorious victory over pride, avarice, ignorance, prejudice, selfishness, and misery, which, they have been appointed to lead on ; let them cast from them for ever, yet another of the boasted

balances of the days of misrule: namely, the morality-lowering, misery-deepening expedient of balancing, not only influence against influence, but wrong against wrong, monopoly against monopoly, in short, unjust actual money gain, against unjust actual money loss, and deal out to all men, parties, and interests, equal justice fearlessly: that is to say, sweep away at once every monopoly, restriction on trade, interference with industry, or partial privilege whatsoever, and commute every tax, direct and indirect, for one direct tax on realized property. At the same time lending the arm of power, to the diffusion among all ranks and classes of men, of an education* calculated to lead the reasoning powers of every individual, to recognise the Almighty purpose of creation, to be the extension of felicity, by means of moral order, and to perceive the portion of that purpose, which it is the duty, and for the happiness of each, to co-operate with all in fulfilling.

To conclude, then, the philosophy of happiness may be defined: religion, morality, and legislation made one, by that good will to all which necessarily includes equal justice and active benevolence, and which is found, visibly revealed, in all the works of God.

* Among means to this end, the establishment of the National Model School, recommended by Mr. Smith in his " Suggestions on National Education," would be very beneficial.

And, as well might we sunder the living frame of man, and expect the several portions to perform their functions apart, as break this unity of the will of God, and hope the attainment of felicity, either temporal or eternal, from any less connected views of religious, moral, and social obligation.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE WEALTH CREATING ATTRIBUTES OF LABOUR, AND THE CONSEQUENT RIGHTS OF THE LABOUR- ING OR WEALTH CREATING CLASSES.

“ Labour was the first price, the original purchase money that was paid for all things.”—*Adam Smith.*

“ No doubt the rights of property are sacred. Not less hallowed, however, are the rights of industry, that most valuable of all property.”—*Sir Peter Payne, Bart.*

THE earth, without labour, will not yield us her increase; that increase yielded to labour, without further labour, is of little value, the gold of the mine itself is not wealth, till labour has brought it forth. Labour then, being the origin of all wealth, while the strength to labour is a possession given by the universal Father in nearly equal portions to all his children, why should any but the idle know the misery of want? and more especially, why should that misery, the misery of want, be the peculiar portion of those whose daily occupation is the creation of wealth? Accumulation is not what

is here spoken of, but creation. Every shilling accumulated by the capitalist must be first created by some pair of labouring hands ; all the capital he employs, in putting labour in motion, must first have been created somewhere by labour. If the idle man's money be out at interest, and he save that interest, we talk of fortunes made by the accumulation of interest ; but hands must be at actual labour somewhere creating that interest, or there would be no increase to accumulate. In short, wheresoever honey may be found, the working bee alone can have produced that honey. Wherefore, is it then that the creators of all wealth are the poor ? That poor man, and labourer, which is wealth creator, are synonymous terms ? That those whose labour first causes the earth to yield its produce, and then converts that produce into every necessary, every comfort, every convenience, every luxury, and every means of enjoyment, live themselves without comfort, without luxury, without enjoyment, and yet, though thus consuming next to nothing of all the riches they create, and still continuing to create riches, still continue to be, proverbially, the poor ? Is it not manifest that such " a disposition of things " could not possibly have been produced, neither can it be maintained without a fearful perversion of " equal justice " somewhere. For, that if the principle of injustice were not always in active operation, counteracting the constant efforts of industry, that, whatever individual

poverty might at any time have been induced, whether by misfortune, by idleness, or by vice, the prevalence of poverty, generally among the industrious, must have been rendered impossible by the very wealth-creating, and therefore self-renovating attributes of labour. The distress of the labouring classes is a phrase so commonly in use, that we hear it without surprise; yet, when translated into the language of literal truth, what a strange anomaly does it convey—the poverty of the creators of riches! By what title then have we, the idle, the enjoying few, thus converted the great mass of our fellow creatures, for our own special convenience, into one enormous non-consuming productive power, resembling that of mere machinery? Non-consuming of comfort or enjoyment is what is here intended to be understood; for, as to the miserable portion of bare sustenance consumed by the generality of labourers, it may be considered as somewhat on a par with the common repairs of the spinning jenny or the steam engine. Nor is it always that even this bare subsistence can be obtained by the labourer in quantities sufficient to keep the human machine in tolerable repair! How did all this arise? Knowledge, we are told, is power. Did the few who first obtained this power misuse it, and by the cunning it imparted get possession of the whole surface of the inhabited earth, and then envying the rest of mankind the only possession they had left them, the strength of

their own limbs, devise enactments, too intricate for the unlearned to understand, tending to draw to these, the subtle few, all that the strength of the labouring many could produce, with the exception of the smallest possible portion of the coarsest necessities, by which the labouring many can be kept alive, to labour on for the accommodation, in every possible way, of the privileged few? If the answer to this question be in the affirmative, if it be indeed true that even mistaken and partially imparted knowledge was power, and, in the hands of the few, was used for evil and unequal purposes, let enlightened and widely diffused knowledge be still greater power, and, in the hands of the many, who have a common interest in giving that they may receive justice, rectify the evils which, in the hands of the few, its spurious predecessor has produced.

It will probably be said that the existence of property seems to be forgotten, and that property purchases labour. But what is property? With the exception of little more than the briar and the thistle, only another name for the accumulated creations of labour. "What is bought with money or with goods," says Adam Smith, "is purchased by labour as much as what we acquire by the toil of our own body. It was not by gold or by silver, but by labour that all the wealth of the world was originally purchased."

By what acts of savage violence, perpetrated

by the demon of war, or by what other means, whether of subtlety, or of oppression, sanctioned by barbarous ages, both the surface of the earth, and all the hitherto accumulated creations of labour, have passed into the hands of the few and the idle, to the utter exclusion of the many and laborious, may well be matter of wondering speculation: it would, however, be at present a useless inquiry. For the sake of order, for the love of peace, for the sake of the property hereafter to be created, let the rights of property, as they now stand, be held sacred. It is the future rights of labour, the honest distribution of the wealth henceforward to be created by labour, that must be regulated on the unerring principle of good-will to all; unerring, because necessarily including equal justice, that good-will not being to all, which sanctions injustice to any: on thus regulating the distribution of the future creations of labour, the relief of all present misery, and the growth of all future prosperity depend. How then this is to be accomplished, is the most vitally important of all practical questions. Let not the reply to it be forgotten! This end then, so desirable, can be attained only, by establishing such relative proportions between the price of raw produce, and the price of labour, as shall secure to the labourer all the necessaries, comforts, and decencies of life, in exchange for a reasonable portion of his time,

and his strength, expended in labour.* It will perhaps be objected, that what is here demanded may not be always possible. To this objection it is replied that, as long as infinite numbers of idle lookers-on are enjoying, in the most wanton profusion, the very necessities, conveniences, and luxuries, thus being produced before their eyes, by the operation of labour on comparative valueless portions of raw produce, equal justice will never pronounce, that there is not a sufficiency of all things so produced, for the use of the producers. "It is but equity that they who feed, clothe, and lodge, the whole body of the people, should have such a share of the produce of their own labour, as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed, and lodged.†" If the raw produce is now the property of the lookers-on, the labour, at least, is still the property of the labourer. The labourer's interest, therefore, in the article produced, his portion of its value, must, on every principle which includes equal justice, be, at least, as sacred as any other rights of property‡. His portion, it will probably be said, is his wages, and that he re-

* See the political work of Colonel Torrens.

† Adam Smith.

‡ "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," says the word of God. Will that God, who thus vouchsafes to establish the rights of the labouring oxen, take no account of the labouring man?

ceives. But, by what rule is that portion regulated? By what standard, with relation to the cost of raw produce, in which is meant to be included the first necessities which are the maintenance of the producer, is that portion measured? This is the pivot on which the whole question between legislation and oppression turns.

If the artificial or act of parliament price put on protected raw produce is such, that the market or competition price to be had, for not only unprotected, but artificially depressed labour, will not maintain the labourer while at work, whatever may be the amount of his nominal wages, is he not robbed of his real wages?

The scripture denunciation against dishonest weights, and false measures, seems to have been pronounced, with a peculiar view to cases of sweeping injustice, such as this: for, woe indeed must be the portion of that nation which falsifies, or suffers to be falsified, this, the standard measure of all national weal!

Why is a stranger, as described by the Author of England and America, when travelling in England, amazed at the inordinate luxuries, the fairy-tale splendours, the masses of heaped up wealth, among certain classes, and, side by side, the utter destitution of the majority of those, by the spell of whose industry, the scene of enchantment has been produced? Why, but because this false measure, this undue price of the produce of land,

with relation to the produce of labour, is daily absorbing the wealth, which the hands of the whole labouring multitude, are daily creating ; while the multitude, unconscious of the causes of their prolonged penury, or hoping by prolonged toil to surmount them, redouble their exertions, and for sixteen hours out of the four and twenty, continue to create wealth, and yet, continue to be poor ; the very rich, enjoying, the while, an increased command of luxuries, springing, like the verdure of the grave, with unnatural luxuriance, out of the very misery, which this false standard produces and maintains. For the secondary, or remoter consequences, of the existence of this false standard, being, not only to lessen the ability of millions to make purchases in the home market, but to render fair competition with those who measure and are measured to by an honest standard in foreign markets, impossible, the markets both home and foreign are thus contracted, and the labour market, consequently, so over stocked, that the fruits of strained ingenuity, and cruelly prolonged labour, are hourly pressed (for prices next to nothing), upon the said very rich, who alone have a surplus, after the purchase of dear necessities, wherewith to buy such ; in short, in a country where necessities are dear, and luxuries are cheap, misery must dwell. How often are articles, little prized, and not at all wanted, purchased, expressly, as a charity, while the producer, has possibly sacrificed

to their production, his natural rest, or the longed for recreation of breathing the fresh air? Yet, this spurious sort of charity, this purchasing of what we do not want, as long as the false measure is in use, is certainly better than suffering the unemployed labourer to perish for want of food. But would it not be better still, to give the labourer a sufficiency of bread in exchange for what we do want, and instead of giving our surplus for what we do not want, yet which costs him a painful degree of toil, give it in rectifying the false measure, and establishing, at whatever sacrifice of nominal rental might be necessary, if any were necessary, such a relative proportion between the price of raw produce, and the price of labour, as should secure to the creators of all wealth, an honest interest in the wealth they so created? no juggle of nominal high sounding wages, coupled with an obligation to throw those wages away again in markets for first necessities, made ruinously high by act of Parliament. "Every man," says Adam Smith, "is rich or poor according to the degree in which he can afford to enjoy the necessities, comforts, and conveniences of human life."

To secure these to industry, is the one thing needful to national prosperity. The legislator who has effected this, having, like the great Ruler of the universe at the first creation of the world, adapted causes to the production of good by their

own unavoidable consequences, may rest from his labours—his great work is done.

But how is this great work to be accomplished ?

By rectifying the false measure already mentioned ; that is, by suffering the produce of land, and the produce of labour, to adjust themselves, in markets free from all restrictions. This alone, would ensure at once, not only abundance of food, but such an extension of trade, as would relieve the labour market from ruinous competition, and increase national wealth, till public burdens should be no longer felt as such. Yet, we, in the face of principles so simple, so self-evident, with insane policy, frame deliberate acts of parliament, making all raw produce, by law artificially scarce, and therefore dear, and labour therefore relatively cheap, and again, by the operation of a further consequence : namely, the contraction of trade, becoming in its turn a cause, render even this cheap labour a drug in the labour market, and so prevent its following the price of food, and finding its own level, as would be the case, if labour were also, relatively to the intensity of demand scarce. These acts of parliament, which operate as taxes upon, or additions to the cost of bread, meat, butter, cheese, beer, cottage rent, and the raw material of house building, ship building, and all manufactured goods, these are the true causes of that most unrighteous of all anomalies—the poverty of the creators of riches ;

in common parlance, "the distress of the labouring classes."

Acts of parliament, should be acts of public opinion. The great object then of benevolence ought to be, so to rectify public opinion on these points, that acts of parliament such as these alluded to, should make way for acts of public opinion, based on the principle of good will to all, necessarily including equal justice.

We measure our horses' oats to them, in return for their labour, by the feed, not by any money price, which circumstances may put on their services. Why are we thus just to them? Because they are our property; if they die, we lose money. But if we can cheat the poor operative with nominal wages, while we put such a price on corn, and all other necessities, that he can buy but half a feed, when he should have had a whole feed, we let him take his chance, put himself on short allowance if he chooses, or work the harder; should he die in the effort, we lose nothing, we do not even suffer inconvenience; there are other labourers waiting in the market place, who will do our work as well.

Let us suppose a couple, possessed of a small garden, and having a family of children. Suppose those children able to earn wages at various trades, yet completely under the control of their parents; suppose these parents to forbid their children the use of any other food, than the produce of the said

small garden, and to make them pay out of their wages for that produce, twice or three times the price such food could be procured for in the common market, and that, in consequence of this cruel restriction, the children were obliged to work nearly night and day, and that still all the wages they could earn, would not buy above half enough of such dear food, and that therefore, they were double worked, and but half fed, while their parents, by obliging them to buy the vegetables of the said garden, at the said exorbitant prices, got possession of all their wages, and with those wages, without doing any work themselves, they were enabled to purchase the most wanton superfluities, in luxuries of food, and fineries of clothing, and ostentation of equipage, for their own special use, which they never shared with their children, except, they perchance gave to one who fell sick from hardships and want of food, some remnant of a meal; calling the action charity, and laying claim to the character of benevolence for its performance. Or, perhaps, permitted another to spend the precious hour, due to rest or recreation, in the creation of some superfluous toy, and then bought it of them with a part of the money they had wronged them of in the price of their food, declaring they did not want the toy, and only bought it for charity! What should we think of such parents? Yet, are not those who have possession of the authority, and of the land, and

who would keep up corn laws and other restrictions on the importation of food, that they may be able to exact higher rents than could else be paid, and live in a more splendid style than they could else afford, just such parents to the industrious classes, as have been here described; except, indeed, that there are a thousand collateral and complicated hardships attendant upon the actual national wrong, which the supposed family wrong does not reach.

We ought to be independent of all foreign countries for our supplies of food, say the landlords. But can we make this country also independent of all foreign countries for markets for all its manufactures? If not, we cannot, without crying dishonesty to the labourer, use means (effecting the exchangeable value of labour) to make this country independent of foreign countries for its supplies of food. We have hitherto talked of reciprocal protection, (that is reciprocal robbery,) and "all the same thing to the labourer," etc. and attempted to legislate, as though we had the power of realizing an equal pressure in the artificial scale of prices.

But we seem to have lost sight of one glaring fact, which, while our territory is limited, must upset the balance of any restrictive system; namely, that while we have no surplus, over our own consumption, of the produce of land, we have an immense surplus, over our own consumption, of the produce

of labour, that is of manufactures. Therefore, to protect, nominally, every thing in the home market, is in fact to protect, really, nothing but rents—for, as to agricultural labour, and agricultural profits, they must always suffer with, that is be brought to a level by manufacturing labour, and manufacturing profits.* The option, therefore, of establishing an arbitrary scale of prices, can never rest with us, until our Parliament has the same authority over the markets in which the surplus of our labour, that is, of our manufacture must be sold, if sold at all, that it has in the market in which it compels us to buy our bread, at an artificial price.

But, though Parliament can control price, it cannot control prices! Though it can heap one scale, it cannot put a feather into the other! Buying and selling, therefore, under such necessarily one-sided restrictive laws, is a mere mockery.

As well might legislating landowners levy their arbitrary demands at once, as our ministers of peace and love do their tithes, by the point of the sword, as, like Brennus of old, fling the sword of power into the scale, to enhance the weight of the gold demanded! A majority of a house of landlords, throwing out a bill for the abolition of the corn laws, is merely a modern repetition of the insolent Gaul's "*Væ victis*."†

* See Torrens, on Wages and Combination.

† "Woe to the conquered!"

CHAPTER III.

ON THE SOURCES OF NATIONAL WEALTH.

There is no country in which the whole annual produce is employed in maintaining the industrious. The idle every where consume a great part of it; according to the proportions in which it is divided between these two orders, its value must increase or diminish.—*Adam Smith.*

WHAT are the sources of a nation's wealth?

The most important are, first, the marketable value, in the market of the world, of the natural productions of its soil, over and above the cost of production. Secondly, the value added by its labour to raw material, home or foreign, over and above the cost of the raw material, whether imported or produced at home; and the cost of preparing the finished goods for, and bringing them to, market. Thirdly, the amount of its profitably employed capital. Fourthly, the productiveness of the field on which the capital is sown.

If a nation devote its soil to the production of an article which, in the market of the world, would

not sell for the cost of production, does its land continue to be a source of national wealth ?

Certainly not. On the contrary, it becomes a cause of national loss, by inducing an outlay of capital and of labour, which are never replaced.

Under such circumstances, what portion of the produce of the soil, is justly due to the landlord as rent ?

No portion ! he having rendered himself not only a pauper, but a bankrupt debtor, by a misuse of his own property, in which misuse a portion of the property of others is involved.

What national wealth, or national property, remains to a nation so circumstanced ?

The proportion of productive labour which its population can furnish, which its capital can set in motion, and for the productions of which a market can be found. If, therefore, we would have such a nation prosper, we must inquire what are the best means of supplying, sustaining, and stimulating its productive industry.

Do we supply productive industry while we endeavour to check population, or to encourage emigration ? Certainly not.* Do we sustain productive industry while we tax bread, meat, butter, cheese, tea, sugar, and beer ? Certainly not. Do we

* While a free trade in corn is refused, emigration, like bleeding in acute inflammation, may possibly be a necessary sacrifice to urgent circumstances : but it is still a sacrifice.

stimulate productive industry, while we deny to the labourer the hope of securing, by his utmost exertions, even the necessities, much less the comforts and decencies, of life? Most certainly not.

What wealth is lost to the whole nation?

That accumulation of the creations of labour, which goes in artificial prices to a foreign monopolist, whether in the shape of a greater quantity of printed calico, Birmingham hardware, or gold pieces.

What wealth is utterly lost, not only to the nation in which the error is committed, but to the whole world?

Whatever is the surplus cost of any forced production, over and above what the same production could be procured for, from any other country.

Under what circumstances will the extreme folly, and sinful waste of such forced production, be persisted in, when found to be a loss?

When protections are granted to monopolists; without which false support, forced production, if tried once, would not be resorted to a second time, for the best of reasons, because the whole of the dead loss, would fall upon the projectors of the idle scheme, of course, on those who held the power in their own hands, of stopping the losing game.

When protection screens the unwise producer, from the loss incurred by his imprudent production, on whom does the loss fall?

Most unjustly on the consumer, who, however

wise or prudent he may be, has no means of escaping the consequences of the folly of other people, but by entering into a league with the smuggler.

Does the labourer lose the extra labour expended in forced production ?

Not in the first instance, he being paid the market price of labour, for this labour, as for any other. It is when the master producer assumes—as in the case of the landowner's monopoly—or is given by unjust favour, as in the case of the West India sugar monopolists, the power of putting the extra cost of his misjudged forced production, together with a profit for himself, in the shape of artificial price, on the article produced, and of prohibiting the rest of the community, from purchasing the article where it has been produced cheaply, and therefore can be sold at a lower price. Under these circumstances it is that the labourer, if a consumer of the protected article, is compelled to give away to the master producer, as much of his labour as went in earning the extra portion of his wages, which it takes to make up the artificial price of the article in question, over and above what that article could have been obtained for in a free market. It is thus that the infatuation of a forced production in corn, supported by the injustice of protection, robs the labourer in this country, in his capacity of consumer, of half his earnings.

What is attainable national wealth not attained ?

The power to labour, or create wealth, misap-

plied or kept quiescent, by a forced limitation, or arbitrary direction of trade; and capital, or the seed of wealth, kept unsown, or scattered unproductively, by a wilful limitation, or improper choice of field.

What nation will the most rapidly, and most surely become wealthy, not in the mere conventional mediums of exchange, lying in motionless masses; but in true national wealth, that is, in the ability of the greatest number of its inhabitants, to enjoy the greatest quantity of necessities, comforts, and decencies?

That nation which is itself a skilful and adroit manufacturing community, and which can obtain, in exchange for the products of the skill and labour of its inhabitants, the greatest quantities of food to sustain them while at work, and of raw material to which again to add a new value, by new labour, and again exchange for a new profit.

Does the artificial price, paid to the home monopolist, take wealth out of the kingdom? No; it only, like any other fraud, or breach of the principle of good-will to all, transfers wealth unjustly from one portion of the community to another. In its immediate consequences, therefore, it neither increases nor decreases the existing national fund. But we must look at its remoter consequences: if the artificial price, paid to the monopolist, whether home or foreign, be on food,

or raw material, and that the goods to be manufactured are intended for any foreign market open to the competition of goods produced by those who do not pay a monopoly price for food or raw material, the labourer and capitalist must abate a portion of that part of the price of the article, which they might else have divided between them, as the wages of labour, and profit on capital; or they must give up the market, and bring their goods home again. But, if the wrought goods thus rendered useless in the foreign market, are sold much under their value in the home market, will national wealth be thereby increased, or decreased?

Of existing wealth, itself, the transaction would be but another unjust transfer; but of the end of wealth, happiness, it would occasion considerable loss, by depriving many of subsistence, to bestow needless luxuries upon others. Of future wealth, it would also occasion incalculable loss, by causing large portions of the seeds of wealth to be consumed, without yielding the usual increase, and thus hindering the growth of national wealth, almost indefinitely.

If a nation, limited in surface, and therefore limited in the natural productions of food and raw material, yet all but unlimited in skill and industry, therefore all but unlimited in the power of converting raw material into manufactured goods, refuse to take in exchange for those goods, the raw produce of which it stands so much in

need, from countries having no other exchanges to offer but raw produce, and that consequently, it is shut out from the markets of those countries, what must be the unavoidable result?

The loss of all such additions to its national wealth, as might have been obtained by selling its unlimited possessions in skill and industry to foreign nations.

Without discussing here the ultimate impossibility, under such circumstances, of feeding a rapidly increasing population, on a very limited territory, it is sufficient to remark, that though a resort to one or other of the clumsy contrivances, namely, emigration, or an interdict on increase; might, if either could be enforced, arrest the progress of an absolute famine; all hope of an increase of national wealth, must, at the same time, be laid aside, and the public burdens, of which we so much complain, still press upon us with equal weight; because we refuse to suffer countless shoulders to arise, and by assisting us to carry them, render them relatively light.

The whole question, therefore, of whether or not unlimited increase of population, with unrestricted supply of cheap food, and cheap raw material, imported from the alluvial soils of foreign countries, would or would not ensure unlimited increase of national wealth, just turns on this further question: Are there any means within our reach, by which an unlimited market can be provided, for

the produce of the labour of our manufacturing population, on terms affording a sufficient surplus over the cost of production, to be the price of labour, and profit on capital? As long as such market can be found, such price of labour, and profit on capital is so much added to the fund of national wealth. The greater the number of such surpluses which are imported, in whatever shape, the greater the aggregate of national wealth; which brings us round to the plain self-evident conclusion, as true of a manufacturing nation, as of a single factory, that, increase in the number of profitably employed hands, is increase of wealth. In as much therefore, as the master manufacturer who so employs the greatest number of hands, and requires the fewest idle overseers, or servants for mere ostentation, can afford to pay the highest rent, and enjoy the greatest comforts, so can the nation, that employs the greatest manufacturing population, and maintains the fewest non-productive consumers, best afford to pay such public burthens, as may be necessary to its security, or to its greatness, without encroaching upon the private comforts of its inhabitants.

Always premising, therefore, what shall be fully shown in a future chapter,* that an unlimited market can be secured to the productions of industry, every birth prevented, is the possible

* Chapter IX.

growth of a portion of national wealth prevented. Every productive labourer encouraged to emigrate is a portion of wealth lost to the national fund, unless he be sent expressly to plant in the desert a new nation of customers ; in which case, he is a portion of national wealth invested, with a view to a greater distant return, to which a lesser immediate return is sacrificed.

Test our whole system of monopolies, protections, indirect taxation, and all other interferences with trade, in other words, hindrances to the creation of wealth, by these simple principles, and their evils will be self-evident, especially the corn or bread monopoly, which, so tried, comes out in its true light, as an all-pervading cause of mischief, which, in the operation of its widely diffused consequences, diminishes the productiveness of all the elements of national wealth. First, by closing the foreign, and contracting the home market, and thus rendering capital, like so much seed, without a field in which it may be sown, with a fair hope of increase. Secondly, by lessening the actual number of labourers, yet lessening the demand for labour still more, so that the comparatively limited quantity of labour in the labour market, is lessened further in value, by being still sufficient to glut an artificially contracted labour market. Thirdly, by making raw material dear, and consequently lessening the surplus, or profit to be divided between capitalist and labourer, on the

limited quantity of finished goods which do find a market. And lastly, by making food dear, and thereby lessening again the exchangeable value of the already depressed nominal profits of the capitalist, and nominal wages of the labourer. The law, then, which raises the price of food and raw material, while it cannot raise the price of labour, or increase the strength of man, not only checks the growth of national wealth, but oppresses, robs, and starves the labourer !

Of what class, among nations, may England be said to be ?

Literally, an operative and moneyed capitalist united. Her limited territory being but a small garden for the accommodation of her own family, she has, as a nation, no claim, in the market of the world, to the title of landowner, having nothing, or next to nothing to sell, which is the produce of land ; nothing, in short, to offer in exchange for all she may wish to procure from other countries, but labour, skill, and profit on capital. While the produce of her said garden, being insufficient even for the support and employment of her own population, if she is to increase in numbers, and in trade, she must, each year, import food and raw material in greater and greater quantities ; and having no other exchanges to offer, must pay for them, with the value which her labour adds to them, and the profits on her capital.

Is it not her interest, then, as much as that of

any individual manufacturer, or operative, that food and raw material should be cheap, with relation to wrought goods?

Certainly; for her only, though, if properly managed, inexhaustible mine of wealth, consisting thus, in the value which her labour adds to the raw produce she imports, and the profits which the capital employed in setting that labour in motion yields, it is clear, that on the quantities of raw material she in the year thus imports, and having worked up again exports, and the relative prices of such wrought and unwrought, exports and imports, the amount of her yearly income depends.

But does not the land of Great Britain, however limited, constitute her a landed proprietor?

At present, in name only: for, while corn laws continue to foster the forced production of an article, which, if sold at the market price, in the market of the world, would not, on the plan on which it is now cultivated, repay the costs of cultivation. Great Britain not only derives no real rental from her land, but a portion of her labour, and of the profits of her capital, are mortgaged to her landowners for the payment of a nominal rental; and her land, thus rendered not national property, but a tool of national oppression; not an addition to her national income, but an addition to her national debt. All that her landowners are justly entitled to receive as rent, and

which, had it any existence, would thus constitute a portion of the wealth of the nation : namely, the surplus value of the produce of the land, after the cost of production, being sunk by devoting the land to a losing use ; all that her landowners do receive as rent becomes nothing more, neither less, than an unjust transfer to landowners, of the creations of the labour, and the profits on the capital of other classes ; so that, in fact, for agricultural purposes, the whole of the land of Great Britain is thus rendered, in the present state of the European markets, worth, to the nation, less than nothing. The grinding oppression, therefore, to all other classes, of unjustly enhancing the price of grain, is such, that the condition of every inhabitant of Great Britain, save only the landowner, would be improved if every corn field in the empire, if not devoted to some produce, other than corn, or cultivated on some plan other than the present, were flagged from hedge to hedge, for then, Parliament could no longer forbid the importation of cheap food, and while the labourer could procure a double share of food in exchange for his labour, it matters not to him where that food was grown.

But would not the labourer suffer from the loss of the landowner's custom in the home market ?

On the contrary, the opening of trade, which a free trade in corn would occasion, would give him ten customers for each one he had lost ; and each

one of the ten, would give him twice as much bread for his day's work, as the one had used to give him.

By a free trade in corn, however, while the ten customers were gained, the one, as shall in a future chapter* be explained at length, would not be lost ; as land, by being devoted to profitable, instead of unprofitable purposes, would be increased, instead of decreased in real value. But does it not increase the yearly income of the nation, when her landlords get a high price for their corn ; or the same thing, their tenants a high price to enable them to pay landlords a high rent ?

Certainly not, unless they could procure such high price in a foreign market—a thing every way impossible ; first, because, as already shown, England has no corn to spare for the foreign market ; and secondly, because, if she had, corn, as also already shown, would not bring, in any foreign market, the prime cost of having produced it in England. Giving landlords, therefore, by law, a high price for their corn in the home market, is but a cruelly unjust transfer of the earnings of the poor, to the pockets of the rich, without adding a fraction to the sum total of national wealth ; the real value to the nation of any given quantity of corn intended for home consumption, depending, not on its money price in the home market, but on the number of mouths it can feed. So far, therefore, from the

* Chapter X.

high price of corn in the home market, increasing the national income, the contrary is the fact; for, when to purchase food in the home market, a double share of home labour is obliged to be given, an immense portion of labour—in other words, of the power of creating wealth—is lost to the nation, and much capital turned into unprofitable channels, while greater famine and misery to the labouring population is induced, than if the productive powers of the soil were deteriorated one half; as, in such a case, the labourer might not necessarily have an equally depressed labour market to contend with, at the same time with dear food, as the probable effect of a deteriorated soil would be, to require more labour to make it produce, which, though also a national loss of so much labour, would afford some temporary relief to the over-stocked labour market. But when the same sum total of labour raises the same sum total of corn, while yet each individual labourer that can get work at all, must give a double share of labour for his loaf of bread, the hardship on the labourer is much greater, as many will not be able to obtain the employment which procures the loaf, even on these hard conditions.

Suppose a labouring man, who, from the want of profitable employment, occasioned by the contraction of foreign trade consequent upon corn laws, spends a day making a card-paper puzzle, or some other “catch-penny,” as the rich unfeelingly call those practical evidences of a misery, the thus palpable

offspring of injustice : the sufferers, in such cases, giving a proof that they are not only willing, but anxious to work for an honest livelihood. But our poor man, having spent one day in completing the said card-paper puzzle, spends a second day hawking it from door to door, and at last sells it to some fine lady, for perhaps sixpence. The lady laughs at the ingenuity of the toy, flings it on her table, and forgets it ; while the poor man, having thus got for his two days' labour sixpence, instead of five, ten, or twenty shillings, goes home and buys a sixpenny loaf of bread for his family, of half the size it ought to be, even for the sixpence. But, suppose the trade in corn and all things else free, and consequent full employment to be had, by means of our manufactures being taken in exchange for corn, etc. the poor man spends his two days in manufacturing some useful articles, on which he gets, as wages, five, ten, or twenty shillings, besides the accompanying advantages, of being able to purchase first necessities at reasonable prices. The comforts of the poor man and his family are thus, it is manifest, increased incalculably ; while the only privation incurred by any one is, that the fine lady must either do without card-paper puzzles, or, if she still wishes for such sources of aristocratic felicity, she must give a larger portion of her superfluous wealth in exchange for them. Multiply this instance of the relief, which the opening of trade would bestow, by millions, and what is become of

the distress of the labouring, or wealth-creating classes? It no longer exists; while the sole set-off against so much good, would be that, like the lady and the card-paper puzzle, the very rich would, in general, be able to command fewer of the quite unnecessary luxuries, they now buy, as they say themselves, for charity.

Thus, full employment would be a much more important benefit to the poor than cheap food, were they separable, instead of being, as is the case in this country, both dependent on the one cause—a free trade in corn. But, were it possible to give full employment while food was still dear, such persons as our poor man whose case is cited above, would have five, ten, or twenty shillings, instead of only sixpence, wherewith to purchase the said dear food; therefore, would their circumstances be infinitely more improved by full profitable employment, even without cheap food, than by cheap food, without full profitable employment. Let us, however, abolish the corn laws, and so give them both.

In fact, were the importation of food freely permitted, in return for value added to raw material by manufacturing labour, not only each factory workman, but each poor factory child, who could thus by certain movements of its tiny fingers, fill, as by enchantment, our granaries with the rich harvests, wafted from the fertile vale of the Mississippi, would become a sort of modern representative of the fabled old Aladin himself, with

his "Wonderful Lamp," who, by the simple friction of his hand on the magic talisman, could summon his attendant Genii around him, and cover the festive board with supernatural abundance. For, inasmuch as the movements of the child's fingers, give to the raw cotton the surplus value it acquires when wrought, whatever corn that surplus value purchases, which did not grow on territory belonging to the nation, is, as far as the nation is concerned, as much the absolute creation of those movements, out of nothing ; that is, without territory to be produced upon, as though the sheaves of wheat came in obedience to a supernatural summons, wafted on fairy wings, from a world of enchantment !

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE COST TO THE NATION OF MONOPOLIES, PROTECTIONS AND FORCED PRODUCTION.

“The cost of living in England is perhaps nearly doubled by our suicidal policy.”—*Spectator*.

“It seems of great importance that governments should be fully convinced of the identity of public and private wealth, because it is on this truth that the maintenance of social order, the progress of public wealth, and the melioration of mankind, do in a great measure depend.”—*Systematic Education*.

LET us simplify the subject on which we are about to enter, by looking at the whole resources of the nation, whether public or private, as one fund. The nation or common wealth furnishes the revenue, independent of local taxation, with about fifty millions per annum, including all taxes, direct and indirect. We murmur at this, and talk of saving a thousand here, and a million there; but we scarcely seem to remember that the nation, or same common wealth, is out of pocket, over and above this fifty millions, paid to the revenue,

a large indefinite sum, not less than, perhaps one hundred and fifty millions, possibly two hundred millions per annum, paid by the consumer, that is by us all, in artificial prices, exclusive of the share of artificial price, caused by the indirect taxation which produces revenue; but additional artificial prices, forming no part of the revenue, and the greater portion of which is utterly lost, in merely replacing the useless cost of forced production, and the remainder, appropriated by monopolists home and foreign, to some of whom it is an unnecessary boon, granted at the expense of equal justice or good-will to all, and to others of whom it proves a curse, by changing the sure, though moderate gains of regular trade, into a dangerous species of gaming, while others again are only repaid by their own monopoly, what they lose by the monopolies of others, so that it is the property which is not engaged in any trade,* and labour, as long as the labour market is overstocked, which actually bears all the loss, without any remunerating circumstance. Waving then, for the present, the whole question of the practicability of reducing our public expenditure, that is the fifty millions per annum we pay to the revenue, if we merely cease to encourage the wilful waste of forced production, and to grant the needless

* Landowners, as long as they retain their bread monopoly, must consent to be classed among the monopolizing traders.

boon of unjust profits, by at once, on the principle of good-will to all, or equal justice, sweeping away all monopolies, protections, and interferences whatsoever with the operations of industry, leaving all markets, whether for sale or purchase, equally free. Monopoly prices, that is additional artificial prices, over and above those occasioned by customs and excise, being thus done away with, it is manifest that the nation will save the whole of the additional sum, of not less than, perhaps one hundred and fifty millions, possibly two hundred millions per annum, which she is now out of pocket, over and above the fifty millions per annum paid to the revenue, and that, therefore, she will be the better able to furnish the revenue with the said fifty millions.* If, further, the act of sweeping away protections, monopolies and other injurious restrictions, be calculated to clear away, at the same time, certain obstructions which now choke the channels, by which new capital would else flow into the national fund, the removal of those obstructions, by admitting that new capital, would, of course, increase that fund. When that fund shall have doubled, when it shall have trebled, when it shall have become ten fold,

* " In public as well as in private expenses, great wealth may perhaps be admitted as an apology for great folly. But there must surely be something more than ordinary absurdity in continuing such profusion in times of general difficulty and distress."

Adam Smith.

will not the fifty millions per annum, with which that fund has to furnish the revenue, particularly if raised, as hereafter to be proposed, by a percentage on that fund, become, at each increase of that fund, relatively, less and less?

The grounds on which it may be considered fair to calculate, that the artificial prices occasioned by monopolies, protections, and forced production, cost the nation, at least, somewhere about one hundred and fifty millions, or possibly, two hundred millions per annum, that does no one any just good, over and above the fifty millions per annum paid to the revenue, are as follows:—

It is a public fact, requiring no proof, that the artificial prices occasioned by protections, monopolies, forced production, and indirect taxation, altogether, constitute much more, on an average, than half the price of every article of consumption. Mr. Kennedy, member for Tiverton, in a late pamphlet of his, calculates two thirds; which, all things considered, seems a very moderate calculation. The rates of duties, however, on most articles of consumption, varying in general from 20 to 150 per cent, are open to all who choose to glance at them. Some of the rates are very much higher. Sir Robert Peel,* by way of defending the Malt tax as being only 57 per cent, enumerated a

* Debate on the Malt Tax, March, 18th, 1835.

list of articles taxed from 63 per cent, to 333 per cent, 627 per cent, and even 930 per cent.

Allow, then, all over half for the artificial prices occasioned by such duties or indirect taxes, as form a part of the revenue, and leave half for the additional artificial prices, occasioned by the enormous waste of forced production, and the mischievous effects of protections, monopolies, and all other interferences with the operations of trade. The "Spectator's Key to Political Knowledge," which seems to have been prepared with great care and precision, says, that at a "moderate computation, nearly twenty-two millions are annually extracted from the pockets of the people" in artificial prices, "by the protection on a very few articles"—— "not for the benefit of the revenue;" but "the bulk of which is dribbled away, and is, in reality, so much wasted."

According to calculations given at a public meeting by Mr. Crawford, our yearly consumption of corn costs us at the present* London prices, eighty millions. The same quantity might be purchased at Antwerp, for fifty millions, at Paris for forty-six millions, at Amsterdam, for forty-two millions, at Hamburgh, for forty-one millions; so that after balancing bonded and free corn, Mr. Crawford calculates that, in consequence of corn

* February, 1834.

laws, we pay, on an average, thirty millions a year for our corn more than the same quantity could be purchased for in the market of any other country. Two millions a year, only, of this immense sum, Mr. Crawford further calculates, goes into the pockets of the landlords, half a million only, we know, reaches the Exchequer, twenty-seven millions and a half, therefore, are by this calculation lost, not only to the nation, but to the world. How lost? Sunk in the useless expense of forcing inferior soils, to produce what the alluvial soils of foreign countries could produce for twenty-seven millions and a half less; which twenty-seven millions and a half, the consumers are compelled to repay to the farmers in the artificial price of corn.* Mr. Crawford then goes on to calculate, that we pay twenty millions per annum in the artificial prices of other articles, protected in consequence of the protection on corn; so that the corn laws, he thus shows, cost the nation altogether fifty millions a year. If, therefore, this corn monopoly were the just property of the landowners, would it not be cheaper to pay them the two millions, and the Exchequer

* "The mean or average of the prices of wheat of the first quality at Hamburgh, Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Stettin, is 31s. 2d. the quarter, and the mean price of wheat of the first quality in London being 56s. the quarter, it follows that the mean price of wheat in London is $75\frac{3}{8}$ per cent higher than the mean prices of the four above mentioned places."—*London Times*, Tuesday, March 4th, 1834.

the half million, and save forty-seven millions and a half, than to continue giving them the two millions, the Exchequer the half million, and throwing away twenty-seven millions and a half in forced production, and twenty millions besides in protecting other articles requiring protection in consequence of the corn monopoly. The corn monopoly, however, as well as every other monopoly, being a wrong instead of a right, we are clearly entitled to save forty-nine millions and a half, allowing that the half million paid to the Exchequer required to be made up.

All these calculations, too, it must be remembered, are made on the limited consumption occasioned by high prices; how much greater would the sum be on the larger quantity that would be consumed, could our labouring classes afford both to pay high prices, and to eat enough. Nor is this view of the subject founded on mere supposition: Colonel Stanhope states in the House of Commons, as a known fact, that in consequence of the artificial scarcity occasioned by the corn laws, twenty-four millions of people are, each year, obliged to subsist on food only sufficient for eighteen millions.

There seems further to be very sufficient grounds for believing, that the nation is out of pocket, on additional artificial prices, a sum greatly exceeding the fifty millions, spoken of by Mr. Crawford, as a loss, especially consequent upon corn laws.

The annual income of the realized property of Great Britain is estimated at one hundred millions.* If this calculation be correct, and that, on an average, half even of prices is artificial, realized property alone, presuming that it spends nearly its income, must be out of pocket nearly fifty millions, by the artificial prices it pays on all the principal articles of consumption. While who shall calculate, the, from hand to mouth, expenditure of the numerous class of labourers, whose wages are paid out of the daily created incomes of their employers, together with the expenditure of those same employers, out of their said daily created incomes; it being only, it must be remembered, the wages of such labours as are employed and paid directly by the realized property class, which can be counted as a part of the hundred millions, supposed to be the annual income of the realized property of the nation. All other wages, and all profits are, it is clear, a sort of newly and daily created, floating, varying, national income, forming an almost incalculable fund, the half of which is no sooner created, than it is of necessity swamped, in the additional artificial prices occasioned by monopolies, forced production protected, and all other departures from equal justice. The annual income of the whole community is roughly estimated at from three hundred millions, to four hundred

* Spectator's Key to Political Knowledge.

millions :* if this estimate be correct, additional artificial prices must cost the community from one hundred and fifty millions, to two hundred millions per annum. It is quite unnecessary, however, to the present argument to decide the point : if we lost but fifty millions by monopolies, and the protection of forced production, the argument is not effected : nay, were the national loss but forty millions, were it but thirty millions, were it but twenty millions, no good reason can be shown, why the nation should be impoverished to any of these amounts, literally in the cause of injustice, for the sake of making unjust transfers of the remainder of the wealth already created, and placing hindrances in the way of the creation of new wealth, expressly that those who wilfully persist in the infatuation of forced production, may continue to be protected, at the expense of those who have no share in the folly, from losses they need not continue to incur, and further, that individual monopolists in trade, may, by the unjust interference of unjust laws in their favour, be enabled, now and then, to realize fortunes monstrous enough to make the Exchequer wonder !

So far as trade is concerned, can such be a healthful “ disposition of things ? ” When any one gains so much more than the wages of labour, or the interest of capital, must not many who have

* Spectator's Key to Political Knowledge.

righteously earned one or both, fail of obtaining either? Could such a "disposition of things" have obtained, if the principle of good-will to all or equal justice were the compass of the legislator? While, if we look but at expediency, is that legislature wise, which, by its enactments, changes the sober, calculating merchant, looking forward with reasonable hope to his yearly balance, into the miserable frantic gambler, gazing with breathless suspense on the throw of the dice, on which depends whether he shall possess a mountain of gold, or put a pistol to his head?

We call our gambling houses hells, and we designate them rightly! Are we justified, then, in rendering our counting-houses the same? Should it be possible for a man to devote the energies of his life, to the honest endeavour to provide for his family by his industry, and earn a broken heart, instead of a fortune?

With the perfectly fair competition, and gradual self-accommodation of supply to demand, afforded by such freedom of trade as equal justice would dictate, such a result would be impossible! Industry, though but an humble foot passenger, is always sure to gain her journey's end, before her setting sun goes down, if monopoly, driving his car of Juggernaut, is not suffered to infest her path, and crush her patient limbs beneath his destroying chariot wheels.

If public statements, uncontradicted, are deserv-

ing of any credit, the merchants themselves are they who declare, that the struggle of monopoly, with monopoly, has changed commerce into a desperate species of gambling, at which fortunes are made, only by lucky hits, and at the expense of the ruin of thousands. And that the countless obstructions, along the force-directed course of every channel of trade are such, that a man, without an overwhelming capital, might almost as well attempt to navigate the falls of the Niagara, as embark in business.

What language does all this speak ? Does it not tell us, with all the force of truths borne out by facts, that the interests, rightly understood, of the capitalists, nay, even of the monopolists themselves, calls as loudly as that of every other class of the community, for the adoption (as the standard measure of all our dealings) of the unerring principle of good-will to all, unerring, because necessarily including equal justice ; that good-will not being to all, which sanctions injustice to any.

CHAPTER V.

THE BREAD MONOPOLY.

“ All protection means robbing somebody else.”—*Corn Catechism.*

THE most ruinous of all our monopolies, and therefore that which calls the first and the loudest for abolition, is that unjust enhancement of the price of grain, occasioned by the operation of the corn laws.

This monopoly is defined by the *Times*' newspaper : “ An extension of the pension list, to the whole of the landed aristocracy of Great Britain !”

Many a proud cheek, of those accustomed to believe themselves the independent nobles and gentry of the land, will burn with indignant blushes, on viewing the subject in this light. Yet, the definition is, it is to be feared, but too just. The sole difference is, that such pensions, instead of being paid out of the Treasury, are advanced to the landlord by the farmer, who is repaid again by the consumer, and thus a tax is levied on the

whole community, not for the purposes of defraying public expenditure, but for the private emolument of the landowners.

Let, however, a better feeling than pride arise in the breasts of landlords and their families, on reflecting, that the pensions they are thus supposed to be justly ashamed of receiving, are, the greater portion of them, made up of deductions from the justly earned comforts of many millions of hard working day labourers, and their wives, and children. And let no one deceive the uninformed, by telling them, with a cold sneer, that the labourer is compensated by receiving higher wages than he would get were the corn laws abolished. This is a dangerous, insidious falsehood, invented to lull honesty and compassion to sleep, while hard-hearted selfishness is abroad, robbing the poor.

Lord Fitzwilliam's Tables furnish an indisputable refutation of this popular fallacy. They show, on the averages of half a century, that the surplus of the labourer's wages, after providing himself with bread, has always been least, when grain was highest, and that, to use his Lordship's own words, "the boasted period of agricultural prosperity, was to the labourer, whether agricultural or manufacturing, a season of distress."

"The high price of provisions," says Adam Smith, "during these ten years past, has not been accompanied by any sensible rise in the

money price of labour." He goes on to show that, on the contrary, the wages of labour generally fall in dear years, and rise in cheap years. While, speaking of America, he says: "Labour is there so well rewarded, that a numerous family of children is a source of opulence to parents." This is, of course, because in America labour is scarce. But, if the price of food alone regulated wages, how could money wages be much higher, yet food much cheaper in America than in England, as is the case, and real wages therefore higher still.

But the reward of labour is ample in America, because, in America, the labour market is not overstocked by want of employment. Cheap food, it is true, from whatever cause it proceeds, puts it in the labourer's power to accept lower wages, down, if he please, to the new starving point; but, will he do so, if the self same cause which gives cheap food, gives full employment to labour, and therefore enables the labourer to demand, and obtain higher wages? Were food, therefore, made cheap by the abolition of corn laws and all other monopolies, the opening of trade, which would be the immediate consequence of such a measure, by doubling and trebling the demand for our manufactured goods, would give full employment at the same time with cheap food, to all our labouring classes, so that labourers being no longer compelled to underbid each other, in an overstocked labour market, labour would, at all times, obtain

a fair proportion of the wealth it created, while even without a rise of money wages, the condition of the labourer would be improved much more than a hundred per cent, as he would have constant, instead of casual employment, and therefore constant, instead of casual wages, while the same money wages per day, would be doubled in value to him, as it would purchase a double quantity of the necessaries, comforts, and decencies of life.

But, if wages are not to be reduced, what is to relieve the capitalist, increase his profits, or make him better able to compete with foreigners in the foreign market?

Cheaper raw material, cheaper subsistence for himself and his own establishment, and markets immensely extended, by obtaining the custom of nations, who have no exchanges to offer but corn, and who, therefore, cannot take our goods, while we will not take their corn, but who would cultivate still more corn, and therefore sell corn still cheaper than even the rates of the present foreign market, were they certain of our custom.

As to the pretext that it is the farmer whom the defender of corn laws wishes to protect, it is almost too flimsy to require refutation. Under a system of free trade, dictated by equal justice, the redress of farmers, not holding leases, rests with themselves, the redress of farmers holding leases, with the landlords, whose honest interest in the soil, can never exceed what remains after the cost

of cultivation, and a fair profit to the farmer, he, the farmer, selling his produce in a free market. The nation which cannot cultivate on these terms, is forbid by equal justice to cultivate at all; except, indeed, at the private loss of such individuals as like the amusement of throwing away their own money. "There is no delusion," says Colonel Torrens, "more mischievous, than the supposition that the high value of agricultural produce is beneficial to the farmer; it is expedient, therefore, to demonstrate under every possible form, the great practical truth, that a permanent rise in the value of agricultural produce, leads to a reduction in the rate of agricultural profits." And that therefore, "in the long run, protecting duties for raising the price of food, produce agricultural distress, as certainly as they occasion manufacturing distress."

Again, as to the unequal burdens, and local burdens, said to press peculiarly on the landed interest, (if indeed any such exist) equal justice says: Make them equal, make them general, but do not make them an excuse for robbing others. That, however, the complete system of free trade, dictated by the principle of good-will to all or equal justice, will ultimately have the effect of raising, rather than of depressing the value of land, and that by means strictly just, shall, as already promised, be shown in a future chapter.* Prior,

* Chapter X.

however, to proceeding, as this little volume professes to address many who, though charitable and benevolent, have not hitherto connected public matters with their views of benevolence, and who, therefore, may possibly have neither studied political works, nor even read through parliamentary debates, it may be useful to give, in a few condensed sentences, the substance of the published or publicly spoken sentiments, on the bread monopoly in particular, of some of our able writers, distinguished statesmen, public characters, and learned and scientific men, who have made this important topic their study ; and the sanction of whose opinions, cannot fail to give weight to the future arguments contained in these pages : when such men declare that the distresses of the poor are induced by the dearness of food, and want of employment, occasioned by restrictions in trade, particularly the corn trade ; an advocate of philanthropic economy, is surely justified in calling upon the friends of the poor, to exercise their benevolence, in strenuous endeavours to remove these fruitful sources of misery, and by applying to all our dealings, the principle of equal justice, flowing out of good-will to all, obtain for the poor the abundant blessings of free trade, namely, cheap food, and full employment.

QUOTATIONS AND CONDENSATIONS.

“ The unlimited unrestrained freedom of the corn trade, as it is the only effectual preventive of the miseries of a famine, so it is the best palliative of the inconveniences of a dearth.—” “ Our country gentlemen, when they imposed high duties on the importation of corn, and established the bounty on its exportation, meant to imitate our manufacturers, and by making their commodity artificially scarce, make it artificially dear.” “ In so doing they loaded the public revenue with expense, imposed a heavy tax on the people, lowered the real value of money, discouraged general industry, and so retarded the improvement of their own lands, which necessarily depends on the general industry of the country—” “ Such regulations also tend to make our manufactures dearer in every market than those of the foreigner, and consequently to give their industry an advantage over ours.”—*Adam Smith.*

“ Your device has been to create an artificial scarcity”—“ You have no wish for a famine ; no one can imagine it.”—“ But the misfortune of the question is, that in whatever way you deal with it, the system resolves itself into one for creating an artificial scarcity.”—“ The operation of the corn laws has been to confer only the fraction of a benefit upon one and that the wealthiest class

of the nation, and do unmixed evil to every other class, their ultimate result will be a fall of rents, occasioned, be it remembered, by an attempt to raise them.”—*Lord Fitzwilliam*.*

“ The first step towards improvement must be the abolition of the corn laws.”—“ The mischievous operation of the corn laws, so far as the operative is concerned cuts both ways, limiting our market abroad ; in other words lowering the wages of labour, by lessening the demand for labour, and at the same time raising the price of food, or making the already lessened nominal wages, still less in exchangeable value.”—

“ Has parliament, then, no power to relieve the people from the distress which overwhelms them? Yes: it has the power to go at once to the root of the evil, and remove entirely the cause of the disease. Parliament has the power to abolish the corn laws, and to open a free trade with those countries, which having vast regions of fertile territory to reclaim, can, with the greatest advantage to themselves, give us cheap raw produce in exchange for our wrought goods. This is that which would relieve the people, no other remedy can eradicate the national disease.”

“ To tell the manufacturer that the home market is better than the foreign, when in the home market his goods exchange for a less quantity of food and of raw material than in the foreign, is to assert a

* His Address to the Landowners of Great Britain.

gross absurdity, a palpable contradiction.”—*Colonel Torrens*.*

“The healthful activity, which a free trade in corn would impart to all the elements of wealth, must spread to and through every class of society, increasing the value of land, of capital, and of labour.”—*Author of England and America*.

“A total repeal of the corn laws would give landlords higher rents, labourers higher wages, and capitalists higher profits.”—“With respect to high wages being the result of a free trade in corn it is so palpable a truth, that it is unnecessary for me to go into any proof of it.”—*Colonel Thompson*.

“The interest of agriculture, the situation of the agriculturist, and the interest of the agricultural tenant and labourer, as well as that of every other individual or class, requires the abolition of the corn laws.”—“In short, an end to the whole system of protection is not only just and expedient, but necessary to the general interests of society.”—*Mr. Oswald, member for Ayrshire*.

Mr. Hume, during the discussion on his motion of the 6th of March, 1834, speaks of landowners as “The privileged few, who had obtained, by means of their undue influence in the unreformed Parliament, an advantage over the rest of the community, which, at no matter what expense of national prosperity, they were determined to maintain.”—

* His admirable work on Wages and Combination.

“ Their claim was for power to tax the community at large to pay off their own mortgages and charges.” — “ Their protection was nothing but a law to enforce high rents by high prices.” — “ The project of this bread monopoly had ruined the agricultural interest, which it meant to assist, while it had starved the rest of the community by the artificial want it had produced.” — “ It would be easy to prove that the manufactures of the country would be treble their present amount, but for the baneful operation of the corn laws ; if they were repealed, there would be no limit to manufactures — therefore no limit to capital or to employment.” — “ The steps now being taken in Germany to shut us out from their markets, were retaliation for our corn laws ; so was the American Tarif.” — “ The corn laws could not be kept up much longer.” — “ He would get rid of all restrictions.” — “ It would be impossible else to feed the millions whom the land’s limited surface was unable to maintain, and who must be maintained by manufactures, if at all.” — “ The Cabinet were of his opinion, if they would venture to speak as they thought.” — *Mr. Hume.*

“ He would say, with Lord Milton, that in spite of any decision that house might come to, restrictions on the food of the people could not endure.” — “ That if they waited for a bad crop, or high prices, the repeal of the corn laws would be called for in less respectful terms.” — “ The present corn laws, after a trial of eighteen years, had been proved, on

the evidence of the agricultural report, to have brought ruin to the farmer, and injury to the soil. They had injured, and now threatened to destroy, our trade. They had brought distress on our manufacturing population."—"Their irregular operation deprived our shipping of the carrying trade in corn; for, in consequence of that irregularity, orders were so sudden and uncertain that foreign vessels, being on the spot, got the freights before English ones could get out."—"These irregular orders, too, were not the inducement to take our manufactured goods in return that a regular trade would be."—"The present system was also so wasteful, that neither the revenue nor the growers benefited by the high price paid by the consumer."—"As to the fear of Europe shutting her ports in time of war, in the middle of last war, when the greatest efforts were made to keep us out, we imported more corn than ever we had done before."—*Mr. Poulet Thomson.*

Col. Torrens, in his very able work on the External Corn trade, says: "The experiment of excluding us from commerce has been tried, and has failed. Though the continent of Europe received its impulse from a single mind, and though America, with a consentaneous movement, closed her ports, yet Napoleon found it impracticable to give efficacy to this system against the trade of England; and while his decrees were evaded or suspended, we received supplies of corn even from France."

Col. Torrens, during the discussion on Mr. Hume's motion of the 6th of March, warned the House of the danger of driving manufactures out of the kingdom, and showed that national prosperity, being based on commercial and manufacturing prosperity, all classes must share in the benefit which would accrue to the nation from the removal of the principal barrier to extension of trade—the corn laws. Was it to be expected that the great manufacturing communities would long submit to this monopoly? Would the great towns allow the landowners to depress the wages of their population for the selfish purpose of augmenting their own rents? In vain had we cheaper fuel, cheaper carriage, better workmen, and better machinery, than other nations, all these advantages were flung away in a cruel and fruitless struggle against the overwhelming disadvantage of dear food.

“No better mode of cheating a nation could be devised than the present corn laws.”—*Lord Morpeth.*

Mr. Wallace attributed “the misery of the weavers, trades’ unions, and all the distress of the country, to the corn laws.”—“Till they were abolished trades’ unions ought to exist.”—“He would support a motion for local boards of trade.”—“What was the corn monopoly but a board of trade?”

“No country can flourish unless the fullest scope be given to its system of exchange.”—“The only

limit to our trade, is the difficulty of procuring returns."—"Corn, if the trade were free, would be one of the most important returns for our manufactures."—"Every thing which interferes with the natural prices of commodities is a great national misfortune."—"The system hitherto pursued, has created a pampered aristocracy, at the expense of an oppressed people."—"Heaven forbid that the legislature, by refusing the people their rights too long, should bring on an awful crisis."—"By knitting nations together in their commercial interests, let us provide against, rather than for war."—"Our strongest bond of peace with America is the trade in raw cotton."—"Let noble Lords remember how Lord Chatham had pointed out to them the increased value of their land, caused by commerce with America."—*Mr. Ewart.*

"The abolition of the corn laws, by extending trade, would develop the vast resources of Great Britain, increase the demand for all produce, reduce taxation, and greatly benefit the agricultural, as well as every other interest."—*Mr. Whitmore.*

"Corn laws are not consistent with justice, with humanity, or with sound policy; what, therefore, is morally wrong cannot be politically right."—"Landowners, who are also law-makers, had led the people into a ruinous war, declaring that they would maintain its cost with their last guinea, and then departed from their pledge, and thrown the burden on the labouring classes."—*Mr Brotherton.*

Such were some of the eloquent pleadings for the abolition of the corn laws, during the discussion on Mr. Hume's motion, on the 6th, 7th, and 8th of March, 1834. On which occasion Sir James Graham and Mr. Baring were amongst the most conspicuous in their opposition to any alteration of those iniquitous laws. It is not, however, intended to cumber these pages by exhibiting the flimsy-veiled sophisms and naked fallacies, which both gentlemen were under the necessity of setting forth, when they thought fit thus to undertake the defence of laws, with the destructive tendency of which their own previous expressed sentiments prove them to be perfectly acquainted. Two somewhat remarkable quotations from the said previously expressed sentiments shall be given here, which may serve as good samples, generally, of the degree of sincerity to which the opposers of honest measures can lay claim.

One is from a pamphlet published by Sir James Graham, some years since, when he was not First Lord of the Admiralty ; the other, from a speech of Mr. Baring's, spoken in Parliament, some years since, when he was not a landowner, but a merchant.

From Sir James Graham's pamphlet, as quoted in the House by Mr. P. Thomson, and entitled : " Free trade in Corn the real Interest of the Landlord, and the true Policy of the State."

" To propose to enrich a nation by forcing a permanent scarcity of corn, and obstructing the

natural course of trade, is, indeed, at variance with common sense. The consequences cannot be mistaken ; they are these : The embarrassment of our shipping, and of our mercantile and manufacturing interests ; want of employment and desperate poverty among the labouring population ; an increase of crime, and a tendency to emigration ; a loss of our currency, and a fall in the prices of labour and of corn ; a diminution of the public revenue, and a derangement of the public finances : and, more than all, the certain, eventual ruin of the agricultural interest itself. These are the bitter fruits of a blind and selfish policy, rapaciously grasping at undue gain, and losing hold of advantages placed within its power.”—“ When England, the land of marine affairs and of commerce, and the best workshop of manufactures in the world, attempted to sell corn in opposition to Poland, a country in want of these advantages, she perverted the natural order of trade, she sold that which it was most profitable for her to buy, and by destroying the means of her natural customers to buy what it was most profitable for her to sell, she artificially lowered the prices of every description of merchandize throughout the long period of sixty four years. So much for the crusade against the natural order of commerce.”—“ Till 1815 the corn trade was free, and commerce prospered. In that ill-fated year, the prohibitory system became operative ; and, as in 1766, trade and manufactures

revived precisely at the moment when the restrictions on the importation of foreign corn were removed ; so, in 1815, when these restrictions were again imposed, commerce languished, manufactures failed, and universal distress overspread the land." Enough of Sir James Graham.

Now for a specimen of Mr. Baring in 1815, when he was a merchant.

Mr. Baring.—" All that had been advanced on this point was a mere excuse for keeping up high rents. It was impossible for any evidence to show more clearly, than the evidence before the House had shown, that the artificial support of the agriculture of the country which had been called for would be improper."—" He doubted very much if this country could ever be made to furnish a permanent supply equal to the consumption of its encreasing population. If lands could not produce corn without greater sums being expended on them than the corn was worth, they might be made to furnish a supply which would make us purchase our bread at 1s. 6d. the loaf, when, if we exerted our industry on that same land to raise that which was congenial to its soil, by exchanging its produce against that of the corn lands of other countries, we might get our loaf for one shilling."—" As to the danger of depending on foreign supply in case of a war, during the reign of Bonaparte, in spite of the greatest hostility, more corn, three times over, had been imported, than ever had been

before.”—“ Experience has shown that a country could never be starved—Holland was dependent on foreign supply, and its price was, and almost ever had been, the average price of Europe.” How the same Mr. Baring who had spoken these words publicly in the House of Commons in 1815, could in 1834 stand up in the same house, and attempt to advocate the continuance of corn laws, must certainly surprise, not only every candid mind, but every person of common modesty.

But to return to our present period and subject, the following is an admirable condensation, by one of the London journals, of Sir James Graham's defence of corn laws, when acting the part of foreman to the special jury, who on the said 6th, 7th, and 8th of March 1834, tried their own cause, and gave a verdict in their own favour.

“ We, the landed aristocracy must live, but, were we to be just, we could not live!”—*Sir James Graham.*

And will the landed aristocracy of Great Britain persist in justifying, by their conduct, those who speak for them thus? The argument, however, seemed to be conclusive, for three hundred and twelve, out of four hundred and sixty-seven, of the said landed aristocracy, voted, though not in these precise words, to this effect, that, as they could not afford to live, as they liked to live, on the fair market price of their land, the deficiency must be made up to them, whatever it may cost

the rest of the nation, out of the wages of labourers, the profits of farmers, the incomes of annuitants, and the ruin of thirteen millions of people dependent on manufactures. And this, although in thus compelling the consumer to give them a boon of two millions, they oblige him, at the same time to cast away, as has been already shown, twenty-seven millions and a half, which benefit no being on the face of the earth ;—nay, which but partly repay the farmer his loss on forced production, a loss which, but for the interference of unjust laws, had never been incurred.

Suppose, for a moment, the wine merchants of England mad enough to form a project for making wine sufficient for the consumption of the nation from home-grown hot-house grapes. Suppose, further, the result to be, that such wine as we import at five shillings per bottle, should stand our home producers in one pound per bottle, so that to have a profit of even five per cent, they were compelled to charge one guinea per bottle—Would any one buy their wine? If they, upon this, set up a cry about their ruinous losses, would parliament give them a protection, amounting to a prohibition on foreign wines? and thus obliging all Englishmen, who drank wine, to drink it at a guinea per bottle?

Not unless being a wine merchant, were the qualification for being a member of parliament, in which case, a majority is a majority, whether

of wine merchants or of landholders. And surely, though the injustice might in both cases be the same, it is a much greater cruelty to rob the consumer, and check the consumption of bread, than to rob the consumer, and check the consumption of wine.

While, however, the jury-box is thus filled by the defendants, in their own case, it is clearly in their power, if not prevented by honourable principles, to give a verdict for themselves, although every man in the great court of the whole nation should see that the property belongs to the plaintiffs. Every body knows that the labourer's limbs are his own property, his estate, his bread, the bread of his children;—but what of that? the landowners have a majority in parliament, secured to them by the possession of land being the qualification for becoming a member of parliament. If they will not make an honourable use of this sacred trust, surely there ought to be some appeal, some court of equity to deliver the nation out of such a dilemma as this! There is an appeal—an appeal from the high court of parliament, to the higher court of public opinion!

Oh! the time will come, some generations hence perhaps, when an Englishman's greatest anxiety will be to prove that he is not descended from any one of those whose names will then appear marked with obloquy on the pages of history, as having, in the great assembly of legislators

to whom the people of England had confided the guardianship of their rights, lifted up their voices, and in the presence of their Maker and the nation, uttered sounding sophisms, with a view to gaining over a majority of the unwary, the uninformed, or the unprincipled, to join them in trampling upon those rights which they had one and all undertaken to protect !

When, however, we look back on the barbarities of former ages, the burnings at the stake, the beheadings on the block, the wholesale massacres, the summary executions, the private assassinations, the poisonings, the starvings to death in prison, and all the inhuman and desperate cruelties, which were in the times of our forefathers matters of common occurrence, when we call to mind that in those days of darkness, the then most polished nobles of the land, instead of deeming their triumph, as in our days, sufficient when they have sent their opponents to the opposite benches of the house, and cheered their speeches, were not ashamed of laying murderous plots, to bring their political rivals to the scaffold ; nay, were proud of the savage power which enabled them to be thus the tyrant disposers of the lives of their fellow-men ; and when, again, the loss of that power was almost the certain signal for their own destruction ; when we remember that all this has been, and then reflect, that the salutary rise, which has already taken place in the standard

of public opinion, has rendered the sanctioned recurrence of such enormities impossible, may we not indulge in a reasonable hope, that civilization, if not staid in its onward progress, by the blinded worshippers of ancient errors, will continue to advance, that the ameliorating and enlightening influences of religion and education which have been sufficient to wash out the deeper die of blood, will at length be able to eradicate the disgraceful stain of corruption, which still disfigures more or less every portion of our social system. That the standard of public opinion, which has so risen, will still rise, till honest measures, instead of being stigmatized as Utopian schemes, shall be adopted professedly because they are honest, till, in short, the sacred principle of good-will to all necessarily including equal justice, being universally recognized by public opinion, it shall become impossible for a man, with the slightest chance of escaping public infamy, to vote against a law which he knows to be just, because it would depress, or for a law which he knows to be unjust, because it would raise his own rent roll ; or to support by his influence a monopoly, or any other abuse, because himself or his friends derive unjust benefit from the same. Nay, would not such conduct become impossible to-morrow, if such actions, instead of being laughed at and called "human nature," rendered a man, however high his rank, or great his wealth, as despicable in the eye of public opinion, as the detected swindler or common pick-

pocket. If the verdict of public opinion were thus invariably regulated by that equal justice which flows from good will to all, could the maintenance of the pride of equipage, be any longer a temptation to commit such actions? Would any man, except indeed such unhappy inhabitants of Bedlam, as weave for themselves regal circlets of straw, deliberately prefer riding in a gilded coach despised, to walking on foot respected?

What is the pride of equipage, of title, of a crown itself, of all the baubles in pursuit of which crime is committed, but the ignorant worship, yielded in ignorance, to an ignorant and misjudging public opinion. Let, then, a more enlightened public opinion teach pride to centre henceforward in virtue, and show men that honesty and disinterestedness, not wealth and power, are greatness; talents and learning, not title, and equipage splendor.

The advantages which truth ought to possess over falsehood, were never more manifest than at the present crisis: every publication circulated, every speech delivered, every resolution framed, on the side of equal justice, abounds with sound unanswerable reasoning; while, on the other hand, among all the men, whether writers or speakers, who have tarnished their reputation, either for good sense, or for honesty, by attempting to maintain false positions, in defence of a system manifestly both unjust and injurious, not one has succeeded, in dressing up any one of the current fallacies of his party, in the garb of an argument,

that could for one moment deceive an honest minded, intelligent school-boy of twelve years old.

For instance, the Quarterly Review, for March 1834, defends the existing corn laws, by expatiating upon the great convenience of being robbed to the same amount for 15 years successively.—One knew what one had to expect, being robbed in a varying and uncertain amount, the acute writer assures us, would be much more inconvenient. Granted; but how does this justify being robbed at all?

Such being the advanced state of public opinion, nay, the results of anxious research, the deductions from close reasoning on these important points, being, as they now are, reduced to self-evident propositions, and dispersed throughout the country in almost every journal of the day, leaving to none the excuse of ignorance, it becomes matter for amazement that there should yet be found a man so hardened in selfishness, so steeled against shame, as to lift up his voice in defence of that blight on every harvest which grows for Englishmen! that Egyptian seven years of scarcity, rendered by act of parliament perpetual; that doubling of the primeval curse by the edict of men, the corn laws! A scarcity of the first necessary of life, established by act of parliament; by the votes of the guardians of the welfare of the community! Is it not monstrous? Twenty-five millions of people consuming only

bread sufficient for eighteen millions ; the deficiency, not equally divided, but falling wholly on one class, that class the creators of plenty, the industrious poor. The class who voted for the monopoly, who benefit by the monopoly, and who, therefore, can afford to pay the monopoly price, enjoying, in the midst of this dearth of their own creating, "bread enough, and to spare." And not for their personal sustenance only, but also for the use, in the most wasteful profusion, of numerous non-productive establishments, consisting of all creatures or things, that can in any way contribute to their luxury, or to their vanity. "The horses will not be fit to be seen in the carriage, unless they get their full complement of corn," says the rich man's coachman. But who cares how wretched the doubled worked, half fed operative looks ! And yet, it is our boast that we are a christian nation ; and those very animals whose sleek appearance, ostentation renders more important in our eyes, than the lives and comforts of our fellow men, are employed to draw us to the house of God, the God of equal justice, flowing from good will to all !

Great Britain has been compared to a ship at sea, short of provisions, and not allowed to touch at any port where provisions may be had. But her case is even worse than this, for though her crew are kept on short allowance, her wardroom officers are feasting sumptuously every day, while those very officers, are they who will not allow her to touch at any

port where plenty may be had, because the majority of them are pursers, and have themselves the selling of the short allowance to the crew—all the dearer for being short!

The Saviour of mankind, in setting us an example that we should follow his steps, blessed a few small loaves, and by his divine mandate made them sufficient to feed five thousand people. The parliament of christian England follows this example—How?

By cursing the bread of twenty-five millions of people, and changing, by their word, each poor labourer's portion, into half of that which his Creator has furnished him with the natural means of obtaining for himself.

Surely, as much food as a man can buy, with as much wages as a man can get, for as much work as a man can do, is not more than the natural, unalienable birth-right of every man whom God has created with strength to labour, and with hands to work. Is it, or is it not an infringement of this right, to compel our labourers, by Act of Parliament—by law—to give as much money for half a sack of wheat, as they could purchase a whole sack of wheat for, did no such Act of Parliament, no such abuse of brief authority, no such breach of the principle of equal justice flowing from goodwill to all, no such law exist?—That law, too, made law by the votes of those who put the difference into their own pockets. As Lord Fitzwilliam justly,

yet in his own too temperate language, says : " The mere circumstance of our being the most extensive proprietors, is no argument for bestowing upon us any peculiar protection. It is probably the cause of our having obtained it ; but, may it not have been conceded to our influence, rather than to our arguments ? "

We have, on the Christian grounds of humanity and equal justice, emancipated the Negro Slave, restored to him his natural right, a property in his own labour. Speaking on this subject to his constituents, Mr. Spring Rice said, truly : " Justice is a question, not of degree, but of principle.—If but a feather press on the brow of a brother, unjustly, we are bound to remove the weight."*

Shall we be less just to our brethren at home ? When, then, and from whom, did the landowners of England purchase a property in half the labour of all our labouring classes, and to whom did they pay the purchase money ? Did the labourer himself effect the sale ? Did the labourer himself receive the price ? Certainly not ! Who else then could sell or give away his, the labourer's title, to that of which he holds his grant from God ?

* It is hoped that Mr. Spring Rice, and all others who, on this principle, voted for the restoration of the Negro to his natural rights, will give the labouring population of their own country the benefit of the same principle, when next the question of the Corn Laws comes before Parliament.

If landowners have pawned to themselves the limbs of the labourer ; who is bound to redeem a pledge made by themselves, to themselves ? Can that have the force of an agreement to which there never was but one party ? Is appropriation title ? Can the idle man, without the consent of the labouring man, without valuable consideration given or received, take a property in the limbs the labouring man was born with ? the only possession we bring into the world with us, the only possession we carry back to the grave, as though it were to proclaim to mankind, that man, made in the image of his Maker, is sacred property, which tyranny cannot appropriate !

If landowners, then, in their buying and selling among each other, have purchased from each other property to which no title can be found, property to which he who made the sale, having no title, could give no title, they must be the losers. If landowners in hoping to benefit themselves, though, at the expense of the rest of the community, have unwittingly injured themselves also, and further, during their period of self-delusion, have incurred obligations among each other, calculated to aggravate their self-incurred embarrassments, we may, on the principle of good-will to all, be sorry for them, but equal justice, flowing from the same good-will to all, forbids that we should rob labour of its reward to relieve them.

The sole, the sacred claim of industry, a pro-

perty in its own labour, is contained in a bond on which God himself has given judgment—it must be paid first, and in full, though the nation were a bankrupt, and all its other creditors received a dividend of one fraction in the pound.*

None, however, need be losers : grant to industry, on the principle of equal justice flowing from good-will to all, the blessings of free trade, free markets in which to sell, and free markets in which to buy, in other words, full employment and cheap food ; and, as shall be shown more fully in a future chapter,† industry will quickly become property ; come up to the point at which it is proposed that taxation should be laid on, and thence carry forward, without difficulty, a much heavier burden than that which now lays it prostrate in the dust, and crushes out its very existence.

* No allusion to funded property is intended : the debts and credits spoken of are here figurative expressions, and mean the privileges of the various contending interests.

† Chapter XII.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE UNNATURAL CO-OPERATION OF CORN LAWS WITH AN ENHANCED CURRENCY, BY WHICH THE BLESSING OF DEAR MONEY, WHICH OUGHT TO HAVE BROUGHT WITH IT AS ITS NATURAL COMPANIONS, CHEAP NECESSARIES, WAS CHANGED INTO A DOUBLING, AND, IN SOME INSTANCES, A FOURFOLD DEEPENING OF THE CURSE OF DEAR FOOD!!

BUT when, in addition to the oppressions on industry already enumerated, dear food, as is the case in Great Britain, is, by act of Parliament, forcibly maintained in an unnatural co-existence in the home market with dear money, the complication of misery produced, by halving the price of the products of labour, and doubling the cost of maintenance at one and the same time, is, beyond all calculation, devastating in its effects, both on individual, and on national prosperity. When it became necessary to restrict an undue paper currency to a level with which, however, rents had previously risen,

and by so doing, double the value of money, had landowners been guided by the principle of goodwill to all, or equal justice, they would have lowered their rents, and required all creditors to lower their demands in proportion, which they then could have done without being losers. But landowners did not so lower their rents ; consequently, rents, the national debt, pensions, salaries, and taxes, for paying them with, in short, every fixed charge which therefore could not adjust itself in a free market to the changed currency, became doubled, while it was soon found that tenants could not pay the same money rent, in money thus doubled in value, on which landlords, having the law, as well as the land, in their own hands, brought dormant corn laws into operation, that their tenants, by getting double price for their corn, might be able to pay them double rent. They thus, not only intercepted the blessing which dear money, accompanied by honest arrangements, might have brought to the community, but turned it into an additional hardship on the industrious classes, and, for a time, an unjust accession of wealth to themselves. The natural effect of making money dear, operating singly in a free market, must of course have been to have made all things else cheap, necessarily including food and raw material. Dear money, therefore, operating singly, must have accelerated the national prosperity of a country like Great Britain, that, to prosper, must be enabled to compete in the

foreign market with nations in which money being dear, all things else, including food and raw material, are cheap ; and who can, therefore, afford to bring manufactured goods into the market, at a cheaper rate than any nation whose scale of home prices is high. But with us dear money was not permitted to bring with it its natural companion, cheap food : for the forced co-existence of laws to screen food and raw material, in other words land, from the natural operation of this rise in the value of money, (an operation which, to be honest, any child might see required to be general), prevented the labourer, whether agricultural or manufacturing, from finding compensation in the double worth of money, for being obliged to give a double share of their labour for money, though of a double value ; because that money, though doubled in value, with relation to what they had to sell, namely, labour, and wrought goods, the result of labour, of which a given sum could command a double quantity, was not at all increased in value with relation to what they had to buy, namely, the produce of land, food, cottage rent, and raw material, over which, in consequence of the corn laws, a given sum had no increased command, the produce of land being screened by the particular operation of corn laws, from the general operation of dear money : so that, while the value of land, and all capital already created and only lent out at interest, was doubled in its power of commanding labour, the difficulty of living by

labour, and of creating new capital by the employment of capital in putting labour in motion, was also at least doubled—in many cases, much more than doubled. It was as though the landed interest and the men of cash had said, in so many words, to the manufacturing interest and the labourer, “A sovereign in our hands, shall henceforth be worth two sovereigns ; but in your hands ; it shall still be worth but one sovereign ! so that, whether you buy of us, or whether you sell to us, you shall lose on both transactions. You are now, by our double manœuvre, become at least half bondsmen ; for we are, by a law that we made ourselves, entitled to at least half your labour without purchase, whenever we choose to purchase the other half, which you must always choose to sell, or starve ; for, whether you like our terms or not, we will not allow you to buy food any where else on any better terms. Suppose a man owns a field (farming is not here alluded to, but the only difference would be, that the advantage would find its way into the landlord’s pocket, in an advance of rent, whenever the lease, if there were one, terminated), the supposed field produces ten quarters of wheat. When money was cheap, and corn laws were not in operation, these ten quarters of wheat brought the owner of the field, say, twenty shillings a quarter—in all, ten pounds. But corn laws come into operation, and the money price of corn doubles, that is, becomes forty shillings a quarter. The owner of the

field consequently sells his ten quarters of wheat to a manufacturer for twenty pounds instead of ten pounds. He now wishes to lay out his twenty pounds in cloth ; but restricted, or enhanced currency, having produced dear money, the cloth, which, in the time of paper currency, or cheap money, was twenty shillings a yard, now that money is doubled in value, sells at ten shillings a yard ; so that the owner of the field carries home forty yards of cloth in exchange for his ten quarters of wheat, instead of only ten yards as formerly ; while the manufacturer carries his twenty pounds that he got instead of forty pounds for his forty yards of cloth, to the corn market ; but corn laws having doubled the price of corn, he brings home for his twenty pounds, which he got instead of forty pounds, only the same ten quarters of wheat he used to get for the ten pounds that used to be the price of ten yards of cloth. Yet each ten yards, of this forty yards, cost him more to produce than the one ten yards did before, the quantity of labour on each ten yards being the same, and the food consumed, while performing the labour double in price ; or, if this portion of the loss is saved to the master manufacturer by the cruel privations of the operative, so much the worse ! Or, even allow that the corn laws, instead of doubling, only upheld the price of the produce of land, at the same money price which it had borne in the time of paper currency or cheap money, while labour, and the produce of labour, manu-

factures, were reduced to half their former price by the enhanced or restricted currency, or dear money, the manufacturer would have to give, even on this most favourable supposition, twenty yards of cloth, instead of only ten yards, for the same ten quarters of wheat which he used to buy for ten yards of cloth, in the time of paper currency or cheap money. No wonder, therefore, under either supposition, that both profits and real wages should be ruinously low, and no wonder that there should arise the miserable struggle, which is even now at its height between master and operative, contending about the division of what, in too many instances, no longer exists; namely, the surplus after the cost of production, a surplus, which the forced co-existence of dear food, and dear money has nearly annihilated.

Nothing but our rapid and extraordinary improvements in machinery have kept us, as a manufacturing nation, alive so long, under so frightful a complication of diseases. It is, however, a melancholy reflection to think, that the almost miraculous results of all these great improvements, instead of being permitted to produce, as their natural tendency must have been, unparalleled prosperity, have been sunk in merely warding off, for a time, national dissolution. In short, every discovery in science, together with the superior skill and industrious habits of our workmen, our cheaper fuel, and our cheaper carriage, have all

been obliged to be flung into the scale, as mere make-weight against the cheaper food of our "unbread taxed rivals." Whereas, had dear money, when it lowered the money price of labour and labour's produce, been permitted to lower, in the same proportion, the money price of food and raw material, the labourer would have been, from the very first, compensated for what he might have seemed to lose. But his advantages would not have ended here,—the finished goods composed of labour and raw produce, being by the reduced cost of labour and raw produce, rendered saleable on advantageous terms in foreign markets, trade would have flourished, and labour consequently found full employment, which would always have enabled the labourer to have demanded and obtained, a remuneration proportioned to the price of first necessities, instead of being compelled, by the contraction of foreign markets, and consequent want of employment, to underbid each other in the labour market, down to what Colonel Torrens* emphatically calls the starving point; that is, rather than have no work, and therefore no bread, to offer their labour for the price of the smallest possible quantity of food that would keep them alive; and prolong their toil to the greatest possible number of hours, that exhausted nature could hold out under the double infliction.

* On Wages and Combination.

To relieve the labourer, then, it is clear, that labour must get either more money wages, or more food in exchange for the same money wages. But, if we give labour more money wages, we increase the difficulty of selling finished goods, at the market price in the foreign market, and so, ultimately increase the distress of the labourers, by throwing more hands out of employment, as capitalists cannot, of course, continue a trade on which they get no profit.

Therefore, as the necessary relief to labour cannot be obtained by raising money wages, it must be sought by making food cheaper. In other words, it is quite clear that, as Colonel Torrens justly observes, "No measure for increasing the reward of labour can be successful, until the corn laws have been abolished."* It is equally true that, as the unnatural co-existence, caused by corn laws, of dear food in the same market with dear money, must multiply incalculably the miseries of those who sell labour, and the fruits of labour, and buy food and raw material, that no device to make money dear, and goods had in exchange for money, relatively cheap, can have any salutary effect on the comforts of the people, while the arbitrary interference of corn laws, is suffered to screen food and raw material from the operation of such device. Let it not be supposed that it is dear

* Torrens, on Wages and Combination.

money which is here argued against ; dear money ought to give cheap every thing else, and therefore, as already explained, be a blessing to this country ; it being self-evidently necessary that we, Great Britain, as a nation which from limited territory is strictly an operative nation, that is, dependent on manufactures for its prosperity, should assimilate all its rates of value, as nearly as possible, to those of the nations with whom it has to deal. It is dear food, therefore, which is here condemned, and which being itself a curse, has changed what ought to have been a blessing, into a deepening of its own curse. But we live in a blockaded country, and therefore pay siege prices for first necessities, and can get next to nothing for wrought goods.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LEGISLATING LANDLORD'S APOLOGY.

“ BUT,” say the landowners, “ had we not sheltered raw produce from the operation of dear money, cheap food, and cheap raw material must have made land cheap, and this is just what we wished to avoid.”

Grant, for argument sake, cheapness of land to be a necessary ultimate consequence of cheapness of food, which, however, shall hereafter be proved not to be the case, yet, without suffering the produce of land as well as every thing else to find its own level, and granting if necessary a proportionate reduction of every obligation to pay rent incurred prior to making money dear, the act of making money dear, was, in landowners, a dishonest act.

Here the question naturally arises : these principles being so simple, how came deliberate acts of parliament, to be so framed by the “ collective wisdom of the nation,” as to make first necessities scarce ; and, therefore, despite a restricted or en-

hanced currency, dear, and labour and all wrought goods, drugs in the market, and, therefore, despite the dearness of food, cheap?

Because, first necessities are the produce of land, and land is the property of members of parliament; and votes of members of parliament constitute acts of parliament, and acts of parliament are laws. While labour, and wrought goods, which derive their principal value from the labour expended in their production, are the property of those who have neither seats nor votes in parliament, and who have therefore, or at least then, had no share in making laws.

This answer, though but a simple statement of facts, conveys an inference more harsh, it is hoped, than the unpalliated truth. Might not the first framers of those enactments, which doubled rents, and then bolstered doubled rents by corn laws, from gross ignorance, have felt an agreeable presentiment of being themselves gainers, without any very clear perception of who were to be the losers? Perhaps it did not occur to them to reflect, that no one can find a lost purse, unless some one else have lost one; and that, accordingly, they put the found purse, of rents doubled in value by an enhanced currency, and upheld against the just and natural effects of market prices by corn-laws, in their pockets, and only thought themselves fortunate. Now, however, that the spirit of truth is abroad, and the voice of

justice is crying aloud through the land, and proclaiming to whom the found purse belongs, and where, and when, and how it was lost, let us hope, that they who have found it, will no longer refuse to restore it to its rightful owner. In other words, that landowners will no longer refuse to abolish the corn laws: and that with a good grace, instead of waiting till they are compelled to do so, after having forfeited the respect of the nation; while, for what is past, let us still endeavour to apologise: let us hope, that when farmers pleaded the impossibility of paying the same money rents in money doubled in value, that landlords, in shifting the burden from the shoulders of their tenants, to those of the customer, fancied they had discovered a happy device, by which they had satisfied the demands of justice; and that every body's money, being considered, by too many people, something like every body's business—nobody's; they perceived not the remoter consequences of these most pernicious enactments, some short explanation of which has been attempted, in the foregoing chapters on the cost, dead loss, and various other evils to the nation, of protections, monopolies, restrictions, and hindrances to trade of every kind; and the peculiar misery attendant on those effecting raw produce in particular.

CHAPTER VIII.

EVILS OF INDIRECT TAXATION.

“ A tax may either take out or keep out of the pockets of the people, a great deal more than it brings into the public treasury, in four ways: First, the levying of it may require a great number of officers, whose salaries may eat up the greater part of the produce of the tax, and whose perquisites may impose another additional tax upon the people. Secondly, it may obstruct the industry of the people.—While it obliges people to pay, it may thus diminish the funds which might enable them more easily to do so. Thirdly, by the penalties which those incur, who attempt unsuccessfully to evade the tax, it may ruin them, and thereby put an end to the benefits which the community might have received from the employment of their capitals.”—*Adam Smith.*

THE indirect taxes are additional sources of national loss: they occasion, in the first place, the greater part of the expenditure of between three and four millions, the cost of collection, and the preventive service. They are at once the cause and the support of the demoralizing and waste-inducing system of smuggling. They are also

almost insurmountable bars to effectual measures for the prevention of drunkenness and pauperism. How revolting, for instance, is it to every good feeling to read over the details of a debate in which the legislative wisdom of the land, the privileged and educated guardians of the welfare of the uneducated multitude, are employed in weighing, and nicely adjusting the tax on spirituous liquors, so as not to endanger the revenue by checking consumption. Were the revenue rendered independent of indirect taxation, ardent spirits might be taxed a guinea per drop! could such a tax not only check, but prevent consumption. As, however, inordinate taxation only acts as a bounty on smuggling; if we would rescue the labouring classes from demoralisation and pauperism, the use as well as the abuse of spirituous liquors, must be utterly prohibited. It should be made equally contrary to law to use, to sell, to possess, or to give away spirits of any kind. There should be no such thing as legal spirits; nothing, in short, that the smuggler could pass his spirits for. Nor need this incur any expense for a preventive service, for who would import or distil, what they could neither possess nor dispose of, without being in the power, not only of all who respected the laws, but of every petty enemy, or common informer.

Indirect taxes also, in conjunction with monopolies, check the increase of national wealth, by

injuring and hindering trade ; preventing improvements, and contracting our markets, home and foreign. In common with monopolies, they raise the price of necessaries ; and, by so doing, both check consumption, and unequally tax the poor, whose whole expenditure is in necessaries. They open many doors to every species of fraud, minor monopoly, speculation, petty malice, and corrupt favour. The working of the cumbrous and complicated machinery necessary for their collection, requires an infinite number, and furnishes an excuse for keeping in supposed employment, a still greater number of non-productive consumers, whose services would not be required, if simple machinery, manageable by a few hands, were adopted ; and whose maintenance, therefore, is another unnecessary cost to the nation. Every successive trader, also, through whose hands a taxed article passes, must, in the first instance, advance the tax, and, for a longer or shorter time lie out of his money, the interest of which he must add to the price of the article ; so that the complication of charges, which the consumer has at last, to pay, are enormous.* It is plain, then, that indirect taxes must both “ take and keep ” infinitely more “ out of the pockets of the people,” than they “ bring into the public treasury of the

* As shown at length by Adam Smith.

state.”* While the difference is so much of the nation's common fund, not only utterly lost, but wilfully flung away, by neglecting to substitute direct for indirect taxation.

Indirect taxes too, commonly operate as protections to some monopolists, to whom they give, as all monopolies do, an unjust advantage over the rest of the community ; so that the sum which they, in this manner, take out of the pockets of the consumer, is generally much greater than the sum they bring to the revenue. Finally, their tendency, in every stage of their consequences, is to check both production, and consumption, and, therefore, both to lessen the immediate comforts of the people, and to prevent the creation of new wealth.

The hackneyed and only argument ever attempted to be brought forward, in favour of indirect taxes, namely, that people paid them without considering that they were taxes, and were not put so much out of humour by them, as by direct payments to the tax gatherer, might have had some weight in the days of total ignorance ; but now that the world is getting too old to play at blind man's buff, national prosperity, and millions per annum of public revenue, are considerations rather too valuable to be flung away, in the vain attempt to get money out of people's pockets, without ruffling their tempers.

* Adam Smith.

Nor is it because the customs yield eighteen millions to the revenue, and the excise seventeen millions, that we are to be told we cannot do without them. The money, or rather a part of it, may be necessary ; but not the abuses which attend these modes of collecting it. Raise the sum then, or the share of it which may be required, in any other way, for it would be impossible to devise one equally mischievous.

In a former chapter on the cost of monopolies, protections, and forced production, we have seen that by doing away with all such, we should save, of the immense sums which the nation is there calculated to be out of pocket, all but the fifty millions which constitute our public revenue ; it therefore only remains to add, that by simplifying the machinery of taxation ; that is commuting all indirect taxes, for one direct tax, the chief part of the expenses of collection, and the whole of the expense of the preventive service being saved, a sum considerably less than the said fifty millions would be rendered sufficient for our whole public expenditure ; while artificial, as well as additional artificial prices being thus done away with, we should be enabled to purchase all the necessaries of life, at, probably, about one-third of their present cost ;—a remunerating circumstance which would more than repay all consumers, whatever sum might be their portion of the commutation, or one direct tax to be proposed.

Indirect taxes, however, are so much part and parcel of the ruinous system of monopoly, or rather are so thoroughly interwoven with it, that the whole of their complicated mischiefs must stand or fall together; which renders it unnecessary to dwell longer upon any of them under this separate head. Let us, now, therefore, proceed to the consideration of a better system.

CHAPTER IX.

THE REMEDY.

“ If bounties, monopolies, etc. are as improper as I have endeavoured to prove them to be, the sooner they cease the better.”

Adam Smith.

“ Beside a multitude of establishments, half job, half monopoly, such as corporations enjoying exclusive privileges, holding lands, levying taxes, administering charities, and bestowing offices.* * * It works well ! George Canning used to exclaim ; countless plunderers respond, it works well !”—*England and America.*

“ Every such regulation introduces some degree of real disorder into the Constitution of the State.”—*Adam Smith.*

THAT good-will, be it remembered, which necessarily includes equal justice, is to all ! Reforms, then, not only to be just, and therefore beneficial, but not to be unjust, and therefore injurious, should be universal in their operation, and simultaneous in their application.

The only plausible arguments, ever urged against any portion of reform, are founded on a portion not being the whole, that is, on the supposed continuance of some evil, which the evil proposed to be removed had served to bolster or prop. But remove, at once, all that is unsound, lay at once a new foundation, on the solid ground of honesty, or equal justice, and the clumsy and unsightly props hitherto in use, will be no longer necessary. At present, each monopolist is but repaid by the unjust gains of his own monopoly, a part of what he loses by the unjust gains of other monopolists; therefore, if an attempt be made to do away with his own especial share of the general injustice, he complains loudly of impending ruin. Whereas, if the whole generation of evils were banished together, each monopolist, by being no longer robbed by others, would be rendered independent of the compensation he had hitherto derived from his own licence to rob others; while the redemption of the dead losses on forced production, and wasteful collection, would thus be a clear gain to the whole nation.

Let, then, all protections, restrictions, exclusions, etc., in short, all and every of the various parts and limbs of that great trampler on natural rights, that great destroyer of national prosperity, the many headed monster, monopoly, perish at one blow! and, at the same time, the whole of the present cumbrous, wasteful, and intricate machinery

of indirect taxation, so favourable to every species of corrupt jobbing, fraud, speculation, and oppression, and requiring a host of non-productive consumers for its mismanagement, be done away with, and a legislative engine, of the simplest possible construction, which a few hands can guide, be substituted in its room.

Of course, we shall have just the same ignorant outcry, which takes place in a factory, when improved machinery is introduced. What is to be done with all the people thrown out of employment? What employment? But let us wave this unpleasant question, and suppose the employment has been hitherto useful. Has not the nation as good a right to increase the productiveness of its capital, by the introduction of the non-consuming productive power of improved machinery, as any master of a single factory? The persons whose dis-services are thus no longer required, must even, like the poor operatives of the said factory, seek employment wherever they can find it; and be thankful that it was not in the days of dear food and restricted trade, when employment was not to be had, that they were turned adrift.

Now, the system of universal free trade and free institutions, demanded by that equal justice which flows from good-will to all includes, not only a total and immediate repeal of the corn laws, and of all restrictions on the importation of live cattle, salt meat, butter, cheese, and all other first neces-

saries and raw materials ; and a commutation of every other tax, direct and indirect, for one or more well considered direct tax ; but, also the discontinuance of every species of monopoly, protection, custom, duty, bounty, public or private corporation privilege, or partial interference of any kind, whether indulgence or restriction, having any tendency whatsoever, to render the earning of honest bread more difficult to any individual member of the community, or to make any article of consumption dearer to any consumer, than, without such partial dealing, would have been the case ; every such interference of artificial laws with natural rights, acting as an unequal tax on some part of the community, and every bar to the honest acquisition of property being tantamount to the taking away of property already acquired.

To enumerate all the beneficial effects of the system proposed, would fill volumes ; the notice of a few of them, however, may suffice to recommend its adoption.

First : An unlimited extension of the foreign market for our manufactured goods, which would give immediate and full employment to our whole manufacturing population, and also to such agricultural labourers as, if not absorbed by an extensive adoption of the small allotment system, might be thrown idle by our ceasing to grow corn on inferior soils.

Second : A reduction of the price of food and raw

materials, in relation to wrought goods, which would enable us to make our exchanges in the foreign market, on advantageous terms.

Third : A rise, if not in nominal, in real wages ; for, instead of the cheapness of food producing, as some few are still so ignorant as to imagine would be the case, a corresponding fall in wages, the new demand for manufactured goods, occasioned by the very act of exchanging them for foreign corn, would, by relieving the labour market from the glut which now depresses the value of labour, relieve labourers from the cruel necessity of under-bidding each other for employment ; and therefore, raise real wages, to the utmost that masters could afford to give, retaining a fair profit on capital, without which they could not continue to employ labour.

Fourth : Relief from the sad dilemma of sinking our capital, or starving our operatives ; for, the cheapness of raw material, and of food for the use of masters themselves and their own families and establishments, would render masters better able to remunerate labour amply, and still retain fair profits.

Fifth : Extension also of the home market ; and that by means, in which every friend of humanity must rejoice, namely, by the whole of the labouring population, being exalted in their capacity of consumers, into important benefactors of the internal trade of the country ; for whatever portion of the labourer's wages might be spent in the

purchase of foreign grown wheat, that wheat would, as has been shown, have been brought to the country in exchange for home produced manufactures, whilst the remainder of the labourer's wages, a remainder which, (let it be remembered by the friends of the poor) he would not have had, had he paid double price for his wheat, that remainder would be expended in fresh meat, malt, milk, vegetables, fuel, better clothing, better lodging, and better education; comforts and advantages to which, it is thus clearly demonstrable, that he must have continued a stranger, had not the abundance-giving blessings, flowing from equal justice, namely free trade, and consequent full employment and cheap first necessities, thus happily been dispensed to all, on the comprehensive principle of good-will to all.

Let us endeavour to calculate, or, if that be impossible, to imagine what quantity of manufactured goods it would require to clothe all the labouring classes of Great Britain, up to that standard of comfort and decency, below which no fellow-creature should, if possible, be suffered to sink; and, whatever that quantity may be supposed to be, would find an almost immediate home market, as soon as food became cheap; for it is the first necessity for food, which compels people to neglect the second necessity for clothing; but let them have a surplus after food, and they will desire decent clothes; after both, and they will seek to

be comfortably lodged ; after all three, and amusement, and instruction, and the possession of a few books, will become objects of ambition.

And this, simple statement though it be, of the mere natural consequences of not doing injustice, answers, triumphantly, the question of those who ask the author of England and America, how he would raise the condition of the labouring classes. Abolish the corn laws, and all other monopolies, and establish free trade in every thing, on the unerring principle of equal justice, and the process just described, must go on by the spontaneous operation of natural causes. In short, were fifty volumes written on the subject, it must all end in this ; cease to maintain, by Act of Parliament, an artificial scarcity of food, and that natural principle, universally acknowledged to be inherent in mankind, the desire of bettering their condition, will do all the rest. Thus would the system of free trade which equal justice demands, not only extend the home market for agricultural productions other than corn, and for manufactured goods of clothing, and of furniture, but when the countless numbers of miserable beings, whom Gaskal, in his history of the manufacturing classes describes, as dragging out a wretched and loathsome existence, swarming amid disease, vice, and vermin, in filthy cellars — were, by the blessings of equal justice, namely, free trade, full employment, and cheap food, enabled to provide themselves with

comfortable little tenements ; a wide market would be opened for building ground, bricks, timber, tiles, brick makers, bricklayers, builders, carpenters, painters, etc. etc. and the good done, and the good received by and to all parties concerned, be incalculable. Nor would the wealthy landholder be without his share of the general prosperity. Let him take a few acres of his land, adjoining to, or in the vicinity of any great or growing town, and lay them out on a well regulated plan of whole streets devoted to small tenements ; and he will find builders, and speculators ready to give him a price or rent, such as no land devoted to agricultural purposes could ever produce. While the builders and speculators again, will find all such labourers as are thus lifted above the immediate dread of starvation, eager to avail themselves of the offered accommodation, at rents affording a higher interest on the capital so invested, than could be obtained on any other outlay.*

In a short time also, numbers would rise from the pauper and labour ranks, into a comfortable sort of class, possessed of some small competency, and able, without ceasing to be industrious themselves, to become, in their turn, good customers, not only to the labourer and manufacturer, but to

* To add small allotments, if possible, would be an infinite blessing to the labourer, and a great preventive of poor's rates.— See Chap. XI.

many likewise of the "uneasy class" in their various vocations.

Out of this part of the subject arises a consideration of the utmost importance, namely, this: When the population in general were thus raised in their condition, that is, possessed of comfort, character, education, and some little property, there would be something to forfeit besides life, and much of the sanguinary part of our penal code might be dispensed with, and what remained become, with the blessing of God, a dead letter. In France, respect for the rights of property is said to be, at the present moment, to a very remarkable degree, a powerful and pervading national sentiment, in consequence of nearly two thirds of the male adult population having become, since the abolition of the law of primogeniture, possessed of property.

Landlords do not deny, that a free trade in first necessities will give cheap food, for that would be withdrawing their objection to the abolition of the bread monopoly. But how, they ask, can you secure the labourer against a proportionate fall of wages? The answer has been already given. By so great an extension of the foreign market, as shall provide full employment for all*, and oblige

* To which may be added, that an extensive adoption of the small allotment system, would give profitable employment to all now on the pauper list.—See Chapter XI.

masters to bid against each other, to obtain labourers, till labour, which is the poor man's only property, shall become the most valuable of all commodities. Nor should this be considered as a hardship by the rich, for as long as there is no Act of Parliament against their using their limbs in labour, the monopoly of the labour market is given up by themselves, of their own free will, for the ease which they are pleased to prefer.

But how are we so greatly to extend our markets, as always to secure this monopoly price to labour? "Show this," say the objectors, and all the rest, we allow, must follow." Throw open the flood gates, and the waters will flow unpropelled! Abolish the corn laws, and no countries possessing, like both Russia and America, rich alluvial soils, can manufacture for themselves, on terms as advantageous to themselves, as those on which they can exchange the produce of their soil with us, for our manufactured goods. We have, therefore, a security, a mortgage, as it were, on the self-interest of those nations, that as long as they want our goods, and have corn and other raw produce to give in exchange for them, they will continue to take them in exchange for that corn and other raw produce.

But what security have we that those nations will continue to want our goods, and to have corn to give in exchange for them? The known fact of their possessing interminable tracts of rich, alluvial

soil, which, while they continue to multiply, they will, for their own convenience, continue to spread over, and to raise grain upon.

“ Even without Russia,” says Colonel Torrens, “ in America alone, throughout the vast regions of Ohio, the Wabash, the Missouri, and Mississippi, cultivation is spreading with marvellous rapidity, and a market opening before us in which, for generations to come, the demand for wrought goods must increase both in extent and in intensity. The Valley of the Mississippi, 1400 miles in length, and nearly the same in breadth, and intersected throughout all its vast extent by navigable streams, is itself capable of supplying food and raw material for a population greater than that of the whole of Europe.”

It has been lately stated, in some of our public journals, that the Poles, who are in miserable raggedness for want of our manufactured goods, are obliged to feed their swine with their best wheat, because we refuse to take their wheat in exchange for the manufactured goods for which we want a market. Sir James Graham, during the debates on the corn-laws,* admitted that half the land of Poland, a corn-growing country, lay waste for want of a market for the corn which it is well calculated to produce. Yet we are supporting by poor-rates,

* February 6th and 7th, 1834.

and complaining of the expense of so doing, thousands who would support themselves by making more goods, if the goods already made and waiting for a market, were disposed of to those Poles who are in so much need of them, and who have what our unemployed poor are starving for want of, ready to give in exchange for them. Our territory being limited by our insular situation, as we multiply we cannot spread and cultivate; we must therefore congregate and manufacture. But we cannot manufacture the natural want of all living creatures, food; we must therefore manufacture something that we can exchange for food, and exchange it with those who have food that they can afford to give in exchange for it, on advantageous terms.

If the extra cost, of cultivating inferior soils, has already occasioned prices which the poor cannot afford to pay, resorting to the still worse soils we have in reserve, (except indeed for home colonization, on the small allotment plan,*) can only increase the evil. So that, unless trade be permitted to keep pace with population, that trade manufactured goods exchanged for corn, directly or indirectly; the thousand a day added to the population, which is said to be the ratio of our increase, must prove, instead of additional means of national wealth,

* See Home Colonization.

nearly a thousand a day added to the pauper list.

Capital is not our want; bankers Gurney and Lloyd proved, before a Committee of the House of Commons, that they could not employ capital at two per cent. Does not this redundancy of seed call for an increase of field? especially when there are starving labourers, also, standing idle in the market-place, waiting to be employed.*

Abolish then the corn-laws, and all other arbitrary and unjust restrictions on food and trade, and while there is capital to set labour in motion, and a market in which to sell the produce of that labour, the population of the kingdom can never exceed its resources. Nay, if a system of unrestricted exchanges were permitted to extend our foreign markets without limit, and on fair terms, every increase of population would be an increase of those resources, an increase of national wealth without limit: until, indeed, there was not ground to stand upon, in which case landlords would have nothing to complain of, for land, at least, would be sufficiently valuable, even the wretched clay soils, so much and so justly complained of for culti-

* It is also a melancholy fact, noticed in "Facts and Illustrations, published by the Labourer's Friend Society," that our city merchants, in search of interest on capital, lend their money to foreign despots, to work the work of carnage, strangle infant liberty, and crush the hope of the oppressed.—See Chapter XI.

vation, would do to build great manufacturing towns upon, and if the clay, in such cases, happened to be brick clay, so much the better.

This brings us to the consideration of the immense value to which, under a system of free trade, dictated by equal justice, land, in this country, would be likely to attain.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE INCREASED VALUE OF LAND UNDER A SYSTEM OF FREE TRADE.

“A Free Trade in Corn, the real interest of the Landlord, and the true policy of the State.”—*Title of Sir J. Graham's Pamphlet.*

WHENEVER freedom, from every unjust restriction, shall permit trade, wealth, and population, to progress with a daily and rapid increase, the land alone, under these favourable circumstances, continuing to be limited, must, as it becomes relatively scarce, rise to an enormous value.

Yet, the first necessities of life, and the raw material for manufactures, being imported in abundance, and at low prices, the new and honest, because natural monopoly which landlords would then possess, would cause neither serious privations to the labouring classes, nor limitations to trade, and, therefore, would not produce that reaction upon the land which has been occasioned by the mistaken attempt to obtain an unjust advantage over the rest of the community, by using the au-

thority of a parliament of landowners, to starve the population into the payment of rents, disproportioned to the existing state of the prosperity of the country.* Nay, should it so happen that under a system of free trade, the whole land not occupied by buildings should, one time or other, come to be required for purposes of luxury, so that the possession of a small portion of ornamental pleasure ground should confer distinction, and fresh vegetables, fresh fruit, etc., become what hot-house grapes and pines are now, the fare only of the very rich, though such an excess of competition, even for luxuries, would be very far from desirable, still, while the labouring classes found the fruit of their labour to be abundance of bread, on terms that did not oblige them to labour beyond their strength, it would be to them matter of comparative indifference, whether that bread fell from the heavens, like the manna of the Israelites; rose from the earth, responsive to their own labours; or crossed the sea in floating granaries, to supply the deficiency from geographical position, of an island empire which, from overgrown prosperity, had become almost one town.

* In a future chapter it will appear, that an extensive adoption of the small allotment system is not only calculated to carry the nation safely and easily through the period of transition, but that it would also be, in all probability, the best possible preparation for a convenient supply of the new species of crops, for which a new demand is anticipated.

Taking, however, a more moderate view of the subject: should such freedom of trade, as equal justice demands, be established in this country, before our manufactures are driven abroad, the future prospects of landlords will be splendid beyond conception! It has been already shown, that, with a free trade in corn, an unlimited market for our manufactures would open before us, the natural consequences of which, must be profitable employment for all the labour of a rapidly increasing population, with a field for, and fair profit upon a daily growing capital; land alone, the while, as has been already remarked, from the single circumstance of our being an island, standing still, while all things else were thus rapidly changing their relative proportions to land, not only must the highest possible degree of competition for land yet known arise, but probably a degree of competition, and a consequent rise in value, as yet unheard of. The enormous price which building land in and near great towns already brings, may give some idea of the state of things which might arise in this country, were trade allowed to prosper unmolested.

Families change from towns to the country, or from towns of more trade or fashion, to towns of less trade or fashion, to obtain, on more moderate terms, a house, with or without, according to their plan of life, a garden, or a few acres of pleasure or accommodation ground; but the price of land must be exorbitant indeed, before people who had

realized comfortable competencies, would become exiles to avoid paying a high rent for their house and garden ; particularly in a country in which they enjoyed the advantage of first necessities, and general prices being reasonable.*

It will probably be asked, in ironical triumph, if it be meant that the whole of every estate in the kingdom would be required for building land. This is not exactly the meaning intended ; but it is meant to be asserted that, at no very distant period, old towns and villages would stretch, and new towns and villages arise, upon, or in the vicinity of every, or almost every estate in the kingdom ; and that thus, every, or almost every landowner, by obtaining building or accommodation price or rent for a part of his property, would find the average value of the whole much increased. This would be the case, even though the actual rents of houses and gardens should not exceed what they are at present, the very lowest price of building or accommodation-land being already so much higher than the very highest price of agricultural land. Indeed, so great is the difference, that the landowner who could find such a market for a very small part of an agricultural estate, would be repaid, although he should

* But house rent would not probably rise ; for however high ground rent might be, the proposed repeal of all taxes and monopoly-creating restrictions on timber, bricks, and all building materials, would very much lessen the prime cost of erecting houses.

turn the remainder into beautiful parks and pleasure grounds for his own gratification.

And, further, it is especially worthy of remark, that the immense value to which it is probable that land may attain under a system of free trade, never could arise in this or any other country, unless it were a country limited in surface, densely inhabited, skilful in manufactures, and importing its food and raw material at low prices ; for, in a country itself unlimited in territory, people would of course spread over that territory, before they would pay more than a certain amount of rent or price for any convenience of vicinity to great towns ; while, on the other hand, in a country limited in surface, and not importing food and raw material, as soon as rents, and consequent prices had attained to a certain point, there they must stop, and the population begin to emigrate, or cease to increase ; for nature herself having fixed the standard of how much work a man can do, and of how much food a man should eat, it needs no prophet to tell us, that it is physically impossible for any labouring population to give a year's, a month's, or a week's labour, for a day's food ; the utmost they can do is, what our struggling population are in many instances now doing : giving two days' labour for one day's bread ; and thus maintaining a species of existence, at, Colonel Torrens' said, starving point. Nor can the inexperienced reader be too frequently reminded, that the labourer can never be remu-

nerated for paying an artificial price for food, by obtaining an artificial price for labour, as long as by restrictions on exchanges, the labour market is over-stocked, and labour therefore exposed to a ruinous intensity of competition. This is a most essential point, and must not for a moment be lost sight of. Were it possible to extend, very greatly, the markets home and foreign, for our manufactures, yet maintain the artificial price of food, the labour market being no longer overstocked, the labourer might demand, and for a time obtain, a corresponding artificial price for his labour, and thus cease to be the sufferer in the first instance; but the capitalist, to pay such wages, and sell his goods at the market price of the foreign markets, must sink his capital; so that, ultimately, the whole nation, labourers, capitalists, landowners, and all must go to ruin together!

On the advantage to landholders in particular, of importing food and raw material, the author of *England and America* gives a case in point, from which, for the satisfaction of those who have not read that clever work, it may be advisable to quote the following passage:

“The soil of Genoa being unsuited to the production of corn and meat, the Genoese turned their industry into the channels of manufactures and commerce, whereby to obtain corn and meat, with an outlay of capital much less than would have been required to raise the same produce on

their own territory. They created, by the increase of wealth and population, a demand for productions which were easily raised on their own soil ; such as garden vegetables, fruit, olive oil, silk, and wine. Thus land, which, if it had been used for growing corn, or feeding cattle, would at best have returned a produce not more than sufficient to replace capital with profit, and for which, therefore, no rent could have been paid, now yielded a rent equal to the difference between the value of the produce and the cost of production."——“ With the further increase of wealth and population, the inhabitants of Genoa, the magnificent (magnificent, because without corn laws) required, besides, houses and warehouses, country villas, pleasure gardens, and ornamental grounds. For these, the staff of life being cheap, they could well afford to pay, without regard to profit.——Thus, land of inferior quality yielded a rent much higher than was ever paid for the most fertile land used in producing commodities for market. While the original cause of nearly all the rent paid in the Genoese territory, was the importation of corn and meat, which produced all the higher degrees of competition for the use of land, on spots where, unless the staff of life had been imported from foreign soils, the lowest degree of competition could hardly have existed :”

The pastoral poets, indeed, of our agricultural

meetings, sometimes remind us, in sylvan strains, that corn fields, agricultural labourers, and sheaves of wheat, are much prettier, and more picturesque objects than factories, steam-engines, and spinning-jennies.—Granted freely ! But we have not the choice. It was not the will of heaven to cast our lot on a great continent, with tracts of unappropriated territory in our rear, to fall back upon, and cultivate, in proportion as we multiply. It is only, therefore, by keeping ahead of the rest of the world in manufacturing skill and industry, and obtaining from foreign soils, in exchange for our manufactured goods, unlimited supplies of cheap food, and cheap raw material, that we can rise above our natural deficiency of surface, and become, though but a little island, the capital of great continents. Should we choose to follow a contrary policy, we must give up the vain and painful struggle, at the crisis of which we have now arrived ; emigrate as fast as we increase, and content ourselves with being, what nature intended us for, a speck among the great nations of the earth.

But we cannot eat gold, or silver, or printed calicoes, or Birmingham hardware, say the land-owners ; it is agricultural labour therefore, which should be encouraged ; modes of making land productive, which should be thought of.

The following, then, is a receipt for making one acre of land, produce more quarters of wheat, than

ever grew on the greatest and best managed farm in the world.

First, Abolish the Corn Laws.

Then, take an acre of ground, (let it be the worst acre of ground in England,) and erect upon it an extensive factory. What, on an average, will be the amount of the wages each year, of all the hands employed within the walls of this factory? What, on an average, the amount of the clear yearly profits of the master of the factory?

How many quarters of wheat will these immense sums purchase in the Amsterdam or Havre market? or in Russia, America, or Poland?

Let the money, then, or rather goods to that amount, be sent to any of these places, and the quarters of wheat brought back and laid down, (if you will, to make conviction stronger) at the very door of the factory.

Are not these quarters of wheat, then, the harvest which, in one year, this one acre of the worst land has produced? Yes, as effectually, and more beneficially produced, than had every wheat ear found its way through the floor of the factory, and flourished among the wheels of the machinery, and the feet of the workmen. What prolific powers of nature could yield, what improvements of direct agriculture, or outlay of an equally great capital, in fertilizing manures, could draw from one acre of land a return of food for

labour equal to that which, on the most moderate computation, would be produced by the process of indirect agriculture here described. Or should our supposed factory be so extensive as to require five or ten acres of ground on which to stand, the profits, and consequently the indirect harvest annually produced, would only be the more amazingly immense.

The labour bestowed on the manufactured articles, it may be said, is value for value. But under a system of restricted exchanges, how much labour is rendered of no value by being shut out, not only from profitable employment, but even from such employment as would provide subsistence for the labourer while at work.

The objections of those who express fears, real or affected, of foreign supply, whether in peace or war, being denied, have been already fully replied to.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF THE SMALL ALLOTMENT SYSTEM, AS A MEANS OF CARRYING THE NATION SAFELY THROUGH ANY TEMPORARY DIFFICULTIES, WHICH MIGHT ELSE ATTEND THE ABOLITION OF THE CORN LAWS.

“ There is the uncultivated land ! *
Here are the people unemployed ! ”

Facts and Illustrations of Labourers' Friend Society.

“ It has been computed that the waste lands of Britain and its isles, might be made to yield to the nation the annual income of twenty millions.”†—*Home Colonization* versus *Emigration*.

SHOULD landlords apprehend a temporary fall of rents, farmers fear some temporary inconvenience, or agricultural labourers dread a temporary want of employment, as consequent upon the abolition of the corn laws, there is every reason to believe that such evils might be prevented, by the extensive adoption of the small allotment system.

* There are thirty millions of acres, fifteen millions improvable. See third report of Emigration Committee.

† Were they not shamefully jobbed. This would be a handsome reduction of the fifty millions taxation.

Numerous well known experiments in cottage husbandry, the satisfactory results of which are already before the public,* prove that labourers, with or without other avocations, holding a cottage, and from a quarter of an acre, and half an acre, to three or five acres each, obtain such crops as warrant a belief, that they could afford to sell their produce in an open market, that is, without corn laws, yet live comfortably, and pay with ease to landlords the same amount of rent which large farmers, notwithstanding that ruinous and unjust parliamentary interference, misnamed protection, find it always difficult, in many instances impossible, to pay.

It may, however, be desirable, before proceeding further with this argument, to state here a few of the many facts and instances which abound in the authorities referred to, as well as some others obtained directly from parties concerned, illustrative of the advantages of the small allotment system, it being on the reality and degree of those advantages, that the conclusion aimed at must be founded.

The Philanthropic Magazine for May, 1828, gives a striking instance of a poor man in York-

* See "Facts and Illustrations," published monthly by Labourers' Friend Society; also, "The Golden Farmer," "Home Colonization," "Communications to the Board of Agriculture," "The Philanthropic Magazine," and the "Quarterly Review," No. 81.

shire, with fourteen children, who lived comfortably and did well on three and a half acres of gravelly soil, so poor that, with an old cottage, he paid at first but fifty shillings rent for the whole. He improved the land to be worth ten pounds rent, paid that advance of rent, brought up his family without knowing want, and, so far from ever becoming chargeable to the parish, realized funds sufficient to rebuild his cottage, and purchase the fee simple of his three and a half acres. He continually repeats, "It is my bit of land that has done it all."

A remarkable instance is also given of a labourer, who came to the village having a wife and six children, and being so poor that there arose a demur about allowing him to remain, lest he should become chargeable to the parish. He began by renting and cultivating one acre; in time became able to purchase nine acres; and is now worth fifteen hundred pounds or upwards. Another instance is given of a labourer, who, from being a poor boy in a farmer's service, and beginning by paying eight guineas rent for four acres, is now in independent circumstances. On one quarter of an acre, he used to raise four tons of carrots, which paid the rent of his whole four acres, while the tops of the carrots were nearly as valuable, for the use of his own pigs, as a crop of cabbages. In another instance, a labourer refused thirteen guineas for the year's produce of half an acre.

The communications to the Board of Agriculture, give an account of a cottager of Sir Henry Vavasour's, who rented three acres of land ; his stock consisted of two cows, and two pigs ; he cultivated his land with the assistance of his wife and a girl of twelve years old, at their over hours. They subsisted on their daily wages at other labour ; paid their rent by the sale of their butter only ; and were in the habit of saving thirty pounds a year out of the produce of the sale of their crops. The communications give also an account of a cottager of Mr. Howard of Melbourn Farm, who at his over hours, aided by his family, cultivated one acre and a quarter, including the site of his cottage and fences. The land was at first so poor, that it was not considered worth five shillings per acre rent ; in a few years, however, care and industry had improved it so much, that it yielded a crop worth ten pounds seventeen shillings. This poor man, before he had any land, had the greatest difficulty in maintaining his wife and three children. His family now increased to seven children, and even his health became indifferent, yet, with this acre and a quarter of originally the poorest land, a cow, and a pig, he maintained and brought up his increased family in comfort, without requiring parish relief.

Sir Arthur de Capell Brooke, by whom the writer has been favoured with the following statement, has tried the small allotment system very

extensively, and with such gratifying success, on his own property in Northamptonshire, that his tenants are, by its operation, removed as it were from beneath the ban of our great national infliction—taxes on first necessities. They all have of their own producing, therefore, without encountering an artificially, or by act of Parliament enhanced market, bread, pork, milk, butter, potatoes, and other vegetables in abundance. They pay their rent with ease, and purchase decent clothing, and necessary articles of furniture, with the wages they earn at other labour—their allotments being, in general, but one acre, half an acre, or a quarter of an acre, according to what they have hands to cultivate; and thus are they enabled to rear and educate their families, however numerous, without so much as the apprehension of ever having to apply for parish relief. For the additional mouths, being thus accompanied by additional, profitably employed hands, the balance is kept even, or rather inclined in favour of the numerous families, as where there is a garden, a cow, and pigs, children who had else been burdensome to their parents or the parish, can be made useful at a very early age. Sir Arthur de Capell Brooke adds, that in no one instance has he found the small allotment system fail.

To poor handy crafts or manufacturing labourers, half an acre, or even a rood is invaluable: it answers the purpose of a sort of saving's bank in

which to collect every spare moment into domestic comforts for their families, by means of the produce of their gardens. The possession of a garden is, to such men, a perpetual lure to do right; an almost irresistible temptation to seek, and assuredly find the most healthful and delightful, as well as profitable recreation for their evenings, after the close confinement, through the day, of the work-shop or factory-room, in the lighter species of garden work, instead of in the ale-house.

The Moor, near Malton,* furnishes numerous striking instances of the countless blessings, moral and physical, showered on poor people of this description by the small allotment system. While, on the somewhat increased scale, suited to making agriculture a sole occupation (as even the few instances already cited are sufficient to prove), such are the vigorous exertions of willing industry, at once stimulated and cheered, by seeing comfort and independence within the reach of effort, and such the constant attention, and careful, unanimous good management of families, whose hopes are all centered in their four, five, or six acres, under their own immediate eye and hand, (for this is a limit within which the personal exertions of a family can still tell) that the results of the small allotment system, under all its modifications, have been, and are likely to continue to be such, as to yield the purest satisfaction to all friends of humanity.

* See Philanthropic Magazine.

As to the readiness of the poor themselves to co-operate with those who would thus render them independent of the misery and moral degradation of pauperism, the writer has been earnestly assured by gentlemen, who spoke from their personal knowledge, that, so far from their labourers manifesting any want of good-will to avail themselves of the humble, the surely not more than just privilege, of being permitted to labour for the benefit of their own families, instead of for the purpose of rendering a middleman, or large farmer and his family independent of labour, that the only danger which experience has suggested, was that of the poor creatures being tempted to work too hard.

Mr. Smith, of Southam, in Warwickshire, who has himself obligingly furnished the writer with the following particulars, has divided one acre into fifteen lots among as many boys of about twelve years of age. Their several payments amount to a rent of five pounds per annum, for the said one acre, which rent the boys pay with ease out of the sale of their produce, besides supplying the fifteen cottages of their parents amply with good vegetables. While so much has the cultivation of these gardens improved the habits of the boys, that though previously they were without any thing better to do than loiter or play about the streets of the village; they are all now in full employment for daily hire, and perform the work of

their own allotments at over hours ; while so great is the pride and pleasure they each take in the plot cultivated by their own hands, that they never suffer the productiveness of their crops to be deteriorated by insects, drought, or weeds, as is so often the case in larger and less carefully tended gardens.

That labourers being without the recourse of some portion of land, is one of the causes of pauperism, and that an extensive adoption of the small allotment system would occasion the demand for poor-rates to disappear, seem to be truths placed beyond dispute, by the various facts, and authenticated communications, given in the several authorities already alluded to. The following is a condensation of some remarkable statements taken from the Quarterly Review, No. 81.

In the parish of Snettisham, in Norfolk, the small allotments obtained, when the waste lands were inclosed, have many of them, from time to time, been taken away from the cottagers, and absorbed in the large farms. All who have lost their allotments have become regular pensioners on the parish ; while in no one instance have those who retained their allotments required relief.

The same is the case in Abringdon Pigots, in Cambridgeshire ; where, while ever the poor retained even right of common for a cow, there were no poor-rates ; but where, since they have lost both that privilege, and the allotments assigned in

lieu of the same, the poor-rates have become enormous.

In the parish of Shottisbrook, Berks, the cottagers had each a field, and an orchard, at the same rent which a farmer would have paid. Each kept a cow, a pig, and poultry, and not one farthing was raised for poor-rates. The parish passed into the hands of a new owner, who deprived the cottagers of their land. Poor-rates commenced, and, in less than one generation, became three shillings in the pound.

At North Creek, near Burnham, Norfolk, according as the cottagers, from being deprived of the use of land, were obliged to give up their cows, the poor-rate advanced; first, from one and ninepence to three shillings in the pound, and, as the number of cows diminished, to six shillings in the pound, till at length there were but two labourers who managed to rent two acres of land at thirty shillings per acre, and keep one cow between them. One of these men brought up five, the other six children, without parish relief, while all the labourers who had no land, were obliged to be allowed two shillings a week for each child.

In the parish of Clapham, Sussex, the farm called Holt, of 160 acres, was once the property of twenty landholders; it then had resident upon it, and gave subsistence to not less than one hundred persons; the number at present connected with its tillage

is under forty ; suppose ten of these to be the family of the now sole farmer, the other thirty individuals derive from the land no advantage beyond daily wages. It is, in short, matter of history, that complaints of vagrancy, and the difficulty of providing for the poor, arose contemporaneously with the system of consolidation of landed property ; and that the increase of the misery and demoralization of pauperism, has kept regular pace with the abstraction of his crofts, curtilages, and common rights, from the English cottager.

The cottagers in Lincolnshire and Rutlandshire generally hold their little tenements directly from the landowners. The wives and children, aided by the labourer himself at over hours, cultivate the allotments. The effects are, that the peasantry are moral and contented, and that the farmers can always procure industrious labourers, and, in busy seasons, extra hands.

Long experience has convinced the inhabitants of Burley-on-the-Hill, Hambleton, Eggleton, and Greatham, that the only means of keeping a labourer with a large family off the parish books, is to let him rent land enough to keep a cow or two. It has been frequently tried in cases when families seemed likely to become burdensome to the parish, and has uniformly been successful in warding off the evil. The averages of the rates in four parishes where this plan was followed, did not exceed nine-

pence in the pound ; while in four in Sussex, taken at random, where it was not adopted, the average was ten shillings and three pence in the pound.

The late Lord Brownlow allotted between five and six acres to each of his cottagers, about five hundred.

The cottagers pay with ease, the same rent that farmers would offer, but would be unable to pay ; while, as to parish relief, it is a thing unheard of among them. The Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Duke of Northumberland, the Marquis of Stafford, the Earl Beverley, Lord Carrington, Lord Stanhope, Sir John Rushout, Sir John Swinburne, Burden of Castle Eden, Babington of Rothley Temple, and many others have tried the small allotment system among their tenantry with equal success.

The farmers of Dauntsey in Wiltshire have tried allowing such of their labourers as have large families to rent three acres each, at twopounds per acre. The labourers immediately ceased to be burdensome to the parish.

The Liendfield experiment affords additional proofs, that the adoption of the small allotment system in agricultural districts, would cause poor's rates to disappear.

Extracts of communications corroborative of the same opinion are given in the Philanthropic Magazine, for October 1829, from Newark Trent, and Thornton, and Thorn, Yorkshire.

STRIKING EXTRACTS CONDENSED FROM FACTS AND
ILLUSTRATIONS PUBLISHED MONTHLY, BY THE
LABOURER'S FRIEND SOCIETY.

“ If but a tenth of the money now spent in workhouses, in what is usually called the relief of the poor, were applied in assisting and encouraging them to thrive and be happy in their cottages, the poor's rates would be lessened and a national saving made in both labour and food. The labourer is capable of more exertion, and is maintained at less expense in his own cottage than in a workhouse; in his cottage he has his family around him; he has something he can call his own; has objects to look forward to, and is the master of his own actions. Domestic connexions, property, hope, liberty, those springs of human action, exist not in a workhouse.”

“ Sorry we are to witness capitalists leaguering with despotic agencies abroad to inflict blows upon liberty.”—“ How lamentable it is, that the wealth accumulated by the industry of our subjects, should be so prostituted, while the sighs of those who cultivate the ground which feeds us, remain unheard !”

“ If capitalists would devote this overflow of capital (which rather than suffer to remain idle, they are induced to lend for the criminal purposes of spreading misery and massacre) to the founding of colonies at home, their philanthropy need not be coupled with sacrifice; for they would re-

ceive good interest for their money. Prisons are erected, transport ships prepared, to dispose of criminals, made criminal by want; manufacturers complain that their goods cannot be sold because labourers are unable to purchase; parishes complain of the pressure of pauperism; but the city is too busy to inquire into these grievances, and we are doomed to write on with a laborious pen, a few philanthropic minds alone, being found to listen or co-operate."

"Poverty makes men tumultuous. Where there are many poor, the rich cannot long continue so in safety."

"Home colonization would give to all that are capable of labour, an opportunity of obtaining subsistence for a family, honestly, by their own exertions. Each poor colonist, whose capital is his labour, would have a saving bank of his own, in which to deposit such labour as he could not dispose of for money, and all his family could assist to make deposits. A money saving's bank, cannot receive deposits in labour."

"Sherwood, Windson, Dean and New Forest, Salisbury Plain, and the unproductive Crown lands, might, by colonization, and a knowledge of what constitutes fertile land, and of how it may be permanently made so, be caused to give sustenance and comfort to millions who are perishing for want. There are many millions of acres, with facilities of water carriage, or with minerals under the surface,

and capable of being fertilized in perpetuity, yet the surface soil of which remains the same that nature left it at the last retiring of the waters. This is a disgrace to the age we live in."

"The Golden Farmer has shown us that land may be made fertile on the top of a hill as well as in a valley, and on all sorts of subsoils."

In short, all that has been said and quoted, goes to prove, that though the great farmer, pressed by overwhelming poor's rates and taxes, and hiring spiritless labour, loses by raising grain, even from the richest soils, and bolstered by dishonest protection;—yet, that on the small allotment system, which absorbs the very population that had else been chargeable on the parish, provides willing industry, and gives to every rood a master's care; the very poorest soils, without other aid than fair play, will be found not only worth cultivation, but capable of being made a great national resource to every class, the landowners, the capitalist, the manufacturer, and the labourer, both agricultural and manufacturing.

It will perhaps be objected, that the small cultivator would lose his present advantages, if obliged to meet market prices in an honest, that is, an open market. But this objection will have little weight when it is remembered, that the small cultivator's greatest advantage, that of not having to purchase first necessities in any market himself, he must always retain; and also, that each small

cultivator, whether of five acres or half an acre, has, for the purposes of rotation,* manure, and domestic consumption, his four or five different kinds of crops ; so that a fall in the price of wheat, would effect only a fourth or fifth portion of his profits ;† while, in the mean time, the growing prosperity and population of the country would be increasing the demand for his green crops. On the contrary, the proportion that the domestic consumption of the large farmer bears to his wheat harvest, is a mere nothing ; while the garden business is, in a great measure, a distinct trade.

Among the various causes which conduce to occasion so wide a disparity between the profits of the large farmer and the small cultivator, as to warrant a belief that the latter could afford to meet an honest market, the most prominent is the fact which the statements just referred to so fully prove, namely, that in parishes where cottage husbandry is extensively introduced, poor-rates disappear: for the best of reasons, because, as already noticed, the very persons whom the large farmer, besides paying his rent, must, had they not had allotments, or profitable employment of

* See "Home Colonization."

† Witness the cottager already noticed, who, from the produce of a quarter of an acre under carrots, paid the rent of his four acres ; also the family who, from three acres, paid their rent by their butter only, and saved thirty pounds per annum from the sale of their crops.

some kind, have maintained, in comparative idleness, by payments to the poor-rate are, by having allotments, enabled both to maintain themselves, and to pay each their proportion of the landlord's rent. Thus the land in the hands of the small cultivator is freed from the heaviest of all the taxes with which the farmer has to struggle—the said poor-rates.

Another equally powerful cause for this great disparity between the profits of the large and small cultivator, is the already noticed stimulus which the hope of independence gives to the exertions of small cultivators and their families, as long as the portion of land held by each family is within limits on which those exertions can tell ; while, on the contrary, with the exception of the little, comparatively speaking, that one family can do on hundreds of acres, the work on large farms must be performed by those whose exertions can have little if any more heart in them than slave labour.* The

* On the present system, no man in England is working for himself (with the exception of members of the legislature, when throwing out honest measures). The rest of the nation is labouring hard, not only for the accommodation, but literally for the pecuniary benefit of the aristocracy or property union : the farmer is selling on commission for the landowners ; the labourer toiling to buy dear bread with low wages, that the farmer, by paying him as little as possible, and getting as much as possible for his grain, may be enabled to pay as high a rent as possible to the landowners. While the manufacturer is striving hard that he may pay double for first necessities, still for the benefit of the land-

other advantages possessed by the small cultivator, are the careful appropriation of manure ; and, as already noticed, of all fragments of time, by means of each family having at their own door a " saving-bank for their spare moments,"* in garden avocations, both profitable and attractive, without being too laborious, for else unemployed wives, children, old people, or the labourer himself, when requiring recreation after harder labour.

Another advantage possessed by the small cultivator, is the more than double return produced by spade cultivation.

Experiments, with a view to ascertaining the difference of return by various modes of tillage, have been tried by W. Falla, of Gateshead, near Newcastle-on Tyne. Mr. Falla obtained, by the plough, thirty-eight bushels of wheat per acre ; by the spade, sixty-eight bushels and a half per acre ; while the average, for seven years, over the whole island, by the plough, is but twenty bushels per acre.† At Sherborne, in Warwickshire, within four miles of Leamington Spa, Frederick Harris, an agricultural jobbing labourer, obtained by spade

owner, and one and all are rowing against the stream to pay exorbitant taxes, for the purpose of making provisions for the younger sons and brothers of the same landowners or property-union, and discharging the interest of the debt incurred by their corrupt practices.

* See Labourer's Friend Magazine, No. XIX.

† See Philanthropic Magazine, May, 1828.

cultivation, in the harvest of 1834, from a piece of ground of rather more than a quarter of an acre, sixteen and a quarter bushels of wheat.*

Now, were spade cultivation to be carried to any extent by the large farmer, even though the greater return should repay the additional hire of labour, (and, taking into consideration the inferior quality of hired labour, this might not always be certain,) yet, the inconvenience would still be very great, for a vast number of labourers would be required for a certain season, who, for the rest of the year, would be without employment, or any means of subsistence except the poor-rate. On the small allotment system, on the contrary, the cottager has his various employments, and, with a little management, his various resources for the whole year round.

In many instances also, these extraordinary returns have been obtained by spade cultivation, from even miserably poor soils; whereas, were the plan of small allotments adopted, as is here spoken of, for the special purpose of carrying the country safely through the period of transition from a restrictive to a free trade system all such rich land, as large farmers found they could not hold unaided by a license to wrong the consumer, would thus be disposable for small allotments, and of course, it is but reasonable to suppose, would pay

* Leamington Press, February, 1835.

still better than the poor land. In addition to all this, it must be remembered, that on the plan of justice to all parties here proposed, it has been all along urged, that the abolition of the bread monopoly should be accompanied by a simultaneous abolition of every other monopoly, and the commutation of every other tax, for one direct tax on realized property; so that thus the small cultivator, having no taxes direct or indirect to pay, (that is until he had realized property) would surely be able to meet an open market, and yet find his profits (great as they are now represented to be) increased rather than diminished.

If it be asked what is to become of the large farmers? The reply is, that as the agricultural interest themselves declare, that the large farmers are already all ruined; the change from ruined large farmers, into prosperous small cultivators, cannot be considered a change for the worse.

To conclude then, the subject of the small allotment system, even those who still choose to be sceptical as to ultimate results, cannot, it is hoped, deny that common honesty ought to have place.

If an epidemic were raging, and Parliament, by a vote, could lay all the cases on one particular class, it would certainly be unjust to exert that power. If Parliament could not avert the evil altogether, all classes would, at least, expect to be allowed to take the best care they could of them-

selves. If then there must be pressure, if then there must be distress which no legislative enactments can ward off or remedy, on what plea can Parliament demand a right to lay it all on the labouring population, manufacturing and agricultural, for the declared purpose of keeping it off of the landowners; for talking of the farmer, who is only market man to the landlord, as an attempt to justify corn laws, is a mere farce.

If Parliament then can do no good, let it at least undo the harm it has done, and do no more harm: that is, let every restriction be removed, let every man have a fair chance, and therefore have himself only to blame if he cannot get on. As to taxation—let no man in the kingdom be taxed!!! But let property alone, wherever it be found, pay its own assurance: Who could then complain of partial dealing? While it ought surely to be a great support and consolation to those making the changes which honesty thus demands should be made at all hazards, to know, as the statements just given fully prove, that the small allotment system offers, at least, a safety valve, rendering any sudden explosion of the miseries of want of profitable employment, and consequent scarcity of food, in a manner impossible, at least if rational steps be taken.

If we have (as officially stated*) in the United Kingdom, thirty millions of acres of waste land,

* See third report of Emigration Committee.

fifteen millions capable of improvement, besides all the great farms of farmers, who having already told down all their capital to landlords, find they can no longer pay their rent, surely neither agricultural labourers nor farmers, nor any other of those, the breadth of whose fingers is so alarming to the philanthropy of Sir James Graham,* need lie down and die, rather than cut up those large farms, and colonize† those waste lands; and so, even from the first, live comfortably; while such a system, superseding the present miserable one of pauperism, induced by the crushing of hope beneath the united weight of corn laws, enhanced currency, and consolidation of farms, must soon create a new home market for home manufactures, and so call into being new manufacturing towns; while these new towns must again afford new markets to the cultivator, till the lengthening vista of reciprocal benefits exceed the reach of human foresight!

While, had we ourselves, and could we by wise diplomacy, induce in other nations the liberality to extend this reciprocation of benefits to the whole of the human family, all mankind would surely find their banquet the more abundant, their labours the lighter, if each locality, producing that for which it possessed the greatest natural facilities, perfect freedom of interchange, brought

* Debates on Corn Laws, 1834.

† See Home Colonization.

a portion of the blessings of every clime and soil, home to the door of each individual, however humble, on the easiest, that is on the cheapest terms possible ; in other words, unenhanced by taxation ; by monopoly ; by forced, therefore needlessly expensive production ; by burnings and destroyings of forfeited goods ; by excise restrictions on improvement ; and by the locust-like devouring of the multitudes employed in doing all this mischief ; and who, if not so misemployed, might have been occupied in producing, that is, creating out of the raw material, some comfort, or luxury, to be added to the general stock of the means of human well being.

CHAPTER XII.

A PROPERTY TAX CONSIDERED,—OBJECTIONS REPLIED TO, ADVANTAGES STATED.

It has, it is presumed, been clearly shown, that, independent of the public expenditure of fifty millions annually, or thereabouts, there are immense sums of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred millions, annually, literally thrown away in the monopoly or artificial prices, occasioned by protections and forced production, home and colonial. And that there are, also, considerable sums wasted in the working of the cumbrous, complicated, and mischievous machinery of indirect taxation. Now, viewing the wealth of the nation as one fund, it is manifest, that the aggregate of these losses must fall on that fund, and that it would therefore be highly advantageous for the nation, not only to abolish the whole system of dead losses and hindrances to the creation of wealth, connected with

monopoly, protection, and forced production, and to confine its whole out-lay to the fifty millions, or thereabouts, now paid into the Exchequer ; but that there would be a further manifest advantage, in raising the sum necessary for the public expenditure, by a direct tax ; as, by so doing, a considerably less sum than fifty millions would suffice.

So far, there seems to be no difficulty in deciding on the measures most conducive to the pecuniary well-being of the whole nation : it is when we separate the nation into classes, and come to inquire what class can or will ensure the payment of this direct tax to the Exchequer, that whatever difficulty there is, or seems to be, arises, could an inexpensively collected direct tax amounting to what might still be found necessary of the fifty millions be invented, which should spread itself over the whole community, it would surely be for the interest of the whole community, to pay altogether a sum considerably under fifty millions annually, rather than continue a system under which the whole community are out of pocket, altogether, at least, two hundred millions annually. The principle, however, of leaving labour, or that industry which as yet possesses nothing but the power of creating wealth ;—free to travel forward unencumbered, and laying the whole of the necessary burdens of the state on the already realized property, and the future creations of labour, as fast as they become realized property, has manifold advantages which

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for the fifty per cent. being paid in lieu, both of direct and indirect taxes, and being repaid by the savings on monopoly prices, and the remission of the indirect taxes only, property must clearly save the proportion it now pays in direct taxes. While, the merely desisting from wanton waste, would be sufficient, without thus taking any thing from the rich, nay, with even some advantage to the rich, to relieve all the industrious classes from all burdens, and furnish them, besides, with all the necessities of life below half price.

In short, the income of all property which is expended in England, pays, on the present system, beside the direct taxes, from fifty to sixty-six per cent. between the artificial prices caused by monopolies, protections, etc., and the enhancement caused by indirect taxation; so that it must certainly be easier for property to pay fifty per cent. only, as a direct tax, than to pay our present direct taxes, and sixty-six per cent. besides in monopoly or artificial prices, and indirect taxes.

But, under the free trade and freedom from monopoly system recommended, property would not have anything like the fifty per cent. to pay; because, a much less sum than the fifty millions of public expenditure, which is squandered under the present complicated, wasteful, jobbing, robbing, pensioning, churching, and dragooning system, would, under the purified and simplified system proposed, be all-sufficient.

In the first place, the £3,491,275 the cost of collection and of the preventive service,* may be fairly deducted.

Secondly, not to touch now on over paid places, whatever sum may be decided on as the just remunerating salaries for public services of every kind at the present prices of all articles of consumption, half of that sum would, on the simplest principles of justice suffice, when those articles were half price, or one third, were they lowered in price two thirds.

Then the estimates for victualling and allowing army, navy, and all other public departments, must, in common honesty, fall to one half, or one third, when the food and allowances can be purchased for one half or one third of their present cost. To say nothing of there being no longer any occasion for so immense a standing army, when there was no longer any injustice to enforce.

The tithes also, (waving the whole subject of church reform), being originally payable in kind, should, in fair dealing, when the very articles which were their original measure became half price, or two thirds less, be commutable for half or one third of the sum now paid, which shews the madness of legislating about the commutation of tithes, before corn laws are abolished.

Next, on the subject of poor's rates, it is not too much to hope, that, with the blessings flowing from

* Spectator's Key to Political Knowledge.

good-will to all, manifested in the fruits of equal justice, namely, free trade, full employment, and cheap food, pauperism would entirely disappear ; and under anything like judicious parish regulations, such would, no doubt, be the result, especially with the aid of the small allotment system,*

* It would also, under the complete system of free trade proposed, be much less difficult than at present, both to devise, and to enforce judicious regulations respecting the poor. (a) A legislature which had provided its labouring population with full employment and cheap food, and removed all obstacles to earning honest bread, and colonized its waste lands, (b) might then without subjecting itself to the accusation of harshness, limit all gratis relief to the helpless from age, sickness, or casualty, and afford relief to the able-bodied only in exchange for profitable labour ; the means of supplying which, however, it should be the duty of the legislature to provide. And if factories and other great works, employing hundreds of thousands of hands, make immense fortunes for private owners, it can require but strict honesty in the management of such, to make them sources of profit to parishes or districts. (c) If not every parish, therefore, every certain district should be furnished with some profitable concern, having a parish farm annexed, in which, not only persons out of work, but duly regulated, properly classed, and strictly separated ; all sorts of disposable hands could be employed. Such district works being provided, almost all punishments, especially the mischievous one of idle imprisonment, might with advantage be changed to profitable labour, the degree of punishment measured by the amount to be worked out, at task work, subject to valuation ; which would obviate the danger both of

(a) Written before the Poor Law Amendment Bill had passed.

(b) See Home Colonization.

(c) Unless indeed the small allotment system supersede the necessity for other aid.

while the use of spirits, that fruitful source of pauperism, might, as already stated, when the health and morals of the people as well as their

idleness and of slovenly execution of work. Insolvent debtors too, instead of being whitewashed by a certain term of idle imprisonment should be made to work out their debt, or, where the sum was hopelessly large, the working out of a certain portion of the amount, such portion to be fixed by a jury or a reference, might, with infinite advantage to all parties, be made the liberating medium.

The property already possessed by parishes and counties, in money, lands, and buildings, such as poor-houses, tread-mills, houses of correction, county prisons, etc., would in all probability be found a sufficient fund for the first establishment of parish or district works, in which the labour, whether of paupers or delinquents, could be henceforth profitably employed, with care, of course, to keep the bad and good characters from having any contaminating degree of intercourse. The profits over and above the subsistence of the persons employed, to be appropriated to the relief of the helpless from age, sickness, or casualty, thus reversing the present just complaint, that the sober and industrious of a parish are compelled to maintain the profligate and the idle, by compelling the profligate and the idle, not only to maintain themselves, but to contribute largely to the maintenance of the sick and helpless. The only argument against thus providing employment for idle characters, namely, that it was giving them an undue preference, and throwing the industriously disposed out of work, would manifestly lose all its weight when, by the opening of trade, the labour market was no longer overstocked. None but the profligate and the idly inclined would, under such circumstances, be out of employment, and, to such, the obligation to labour, would be an appropriate as well as useful chastisement. And by giving, even to those taken into the establishment merely because out of work, subsistence only, but no surplus money

limbs, shall be no longer pawned to the revenue, be utterly put down by law.

Thus would the blessings of equal justice, namely, free trade and cheap food, in all probability remove the curse of pauperism, by removing its three most fruitful sources : want of employment, dear food, and drunkenness, induced by want of comfort at home. But, allow, for argument sake, that the actual number of paupers could continue to be the same ; half the sum which affords maintenance to a given number of people, at the present prices of provisions, must, when prices were lowered one half,

wages, the incentive to seek independent labour would not be destroyed ; while the constant going out of such persons as fast as they could find employment elsewhere, would always keep room in the district works for the special objects of their institution. And though the parish or district works would thus have always the worst hands, as their funds would only have to subsist their labourers instead of paying the wages given in private factories, their profits might, notwithstanding the thus necessary inferiority of their hands, be often immense. While, again, if the funds of any of them should, at any time prove insufficient, (a contingency under proper management almost impossible), they have still the old resources, namely, the rates, county and parochial ; as the claims on these should always continue to exist, although wholesome regulations might reduce them to almost a dead letter.

If, however, the small allotment system were extensively adopted, there is every reason to believe that no other means of relieving the poor would be found necessary ; and that both crime and pauperism would almost, if not altogether, disappear.—See Chap. XI. on Small Allotment System, where facts corroborative of this opinion are stated, and authorities given.

afford an equally comfortable maintenance to an equal number, while, if the most probable computations be correct, one-third would suffice. Thus, it is clear, that if realized property were not relieved by the operation of the proposed system, from its proportion of the whole burden of the present poor rates, it must, at least, be relieved from one-half or two-thirds.

The Edinburgh Review, in defence of the landowners' bread monopoly, pleads the peculiar burdens on land of eight millions poor's rates, and three millions tithes ; though it was the bread monopoly which created poor's rates, and although the tithes were never the property of the landowners. But, were the bread monopoly a right instead of a robbery ; and had the tithes originally belonged to the landlords ; still landlords would, on their own showing (allowing that those burdens did fall on them in particular), be greatly overpaid for parting with the said bread monopoly, by the effects which cheap bread must have on those very local burdens. If Mr. Crawford's calculation be correct, that landowners gain but two millions by the bread monopoly, as they, the landowners, would save, on poor's rates, were bread half-price, at least, four millions, perhaps all the eight millions, and on tithes rated by the price of corn, one million five hundred thousand ; thus, would landowners, after deducting the two millions they are said to gain by corn laws, be clear gainers of, at

least, three millions and a half, if not seven millions and a half, by abolishing corn laws. The fifty or sixty-six per cent. which landowners must save on their own private outlay, by relief from artificial prices would, of course, as in the case of all other persons of property, balance against the property tax. So, that the abolition of the bread monopoly, by which it has been shown that landlords would be gainers rather than losers, cannot, in fairness, be urged as any objection to their paying the moderate property tax, which, under the improved disposition of things proposed, would be all that the real exigencies of the state would require.

Again, having done the labouring classes common justice, by relieving them from the pressure of taxation and monopoly prices, even voluntary charities might be found almost uncalled for. Self-supporting dispensaries, self-supporting schools, and self-supporting old age and infirmity societies, might, if judiciously encouraged, be brought to supersede the necessity for those munificent donations, now too often so grievously required by the poor, and so often, to do them justice, so frankly bestowed by the rich. Many of whom little think, that by their support of a false system, they are creating among thousands, the miseries they are endeavouring to relieve among individuals. If this should prove to be the case, it would be yet another and a very considerable saving to property. When, therefore,

all the remunerating circumstances, which it is thus proposed should accompany the laying on of a property tax, are taken into account, and full credit given for them: it is presumed, that the fifty per cent. objection will be deemed to have been fairly disposed of.

The other objections usually brought against this most just of taxes, will require but few words in reply, being far from formidable.

First, as to the utter childishness of pleading, that a tax on property is a disagreeable, inquisitorial sort of a tax; the argument, or rather assertion, is totally unworthy of reply! Is common sense, to say nothing of humanity, to be insulted, by erecting puling absurdities like these, into barriers against taking the steps most likely to rescue millions of our fellow creatures from misery and want? Let the thoughtless beings, whom a falsely organized artificial social system has filled with happiness destroying prejudices, and deprived of the use of reason, rather be thankful, if honest dealings, rendering candid statements necessary, should discourage in them the petty vanity of pretending to have double their real incomes, till the sudden rising of the curtain, discovering a gaol, or, perhaps, a scene of suicide, undeceives the friends who dined with them on every luxury, which money, or rather credit could procure, but the day before.

Those who apprehend that a property tax would induce persons to conceal property, should consider

that property to return any profits to its owner, must take some palpable form other than money, or, if money be lent on mortgage, or in the funds, or to a private speculator, on bond or note bearing interest. Mortgages and funds are sufficiently ascertainable. Bonds and notes, to make them security, might require stamps, paying a yearly duty equivalent to what the sum would pay as tax, if in the funds. Returns being given in of the issue of such stamps, to whom issued, and for what amounts and periods. If the period be extended, the stamp to require renewal. Thus would the idle lender out of money, as ought to be the case, pay the tax, not the unhappy speculator on borrowed capital, till he has, himself, realized property by the transaction. As to the risk, the capitalist need not then, no more than now lend his money without tangible security, once the temptation to evade the tax, by so doing, was thus removed. Nor would there be much danger of the money being lent out, and yet the stamp omitted altogether; for, men desirous of evading so just a tax, would scarcely have honesty enough themselves, to place much faith in the honesty of others.

As to those who dread that a property-tax would check accumulation, let them ask their common sense whether the necessity of insuring buildings, ships, goods, etc., ever prevents merchants endeavouring to be rich enough to have houses, ships, or

goods. Next, let such objectors consider that accumulation, like every thing else, must have a beginning, and then take into account the great facility given to the early efforts of industry by the remission of taxes, both on first necessities and on raw materials ; and further, let them recollect the acknowledged fact, that the great difficulty is to get together a little capital to commence with, after which, according to the proverb, money makes money. The affected or ignorant fear expressed by another class of objectors, that a property-tax would drive capital out of the kingdom, is equally unfounded. Where trade is permitted to flourish, there will capital seek investment, and when invested, increase with rapidity. What at present drives capital out of the kingdom ? The manacles with which indirect taxation loads the limbs of industry. What at present also drives the income of immoveable capital out of the kingdom ? in other words, enables so many of our luxurious noblemen, our men of wealth and splendour, our men of land and corn-laws, the men whose votes have enhanced the price of bread fifty per cent, for the purpose of doubling their own rents : what enables such men, with perfect impunity, to spend those thus doubled rents abroad, in countries where bread is cheap, because rents are low ? What, in short, enables our hereditary law-makers to establish a parliamentary famine in their native land, and with perfect impunity retire themselves to

enjoy smiling plenty on a foreign shore?—Our taxes being laid on the necessities of life, and not on property!*

It has been objected lastly, and with as much authority as though the objection were conclusive, that, as property has the making of the laws, property will never consent to tax itself. Let it be remembered, however, that public opinion, even in the days of corruption, forced the Reform Bill through both houses of parliament. Public opinion is surely not less powerful now that it is furnished with legitimate means of obtaining its just demands. If then public opinion shall decide that a property-tax on realized property ought to be substituted for every tax, direct or indirect which now exists, such will ultimately be the law of the land.

If, however, it should be found (as some have been illiberal enough to hint,) that let a man be ever so staunch a reformer in all things else, it is not in "human nature" to stand the test of pounds, shillings, and pence, and that, therefore, as members of parliament are always, by their very qualification,

* "The Earl of Pembroke is making preparations for his departure for Paris, where his Lordship intends permanently to reside and support an extensive establishment. No fewer than seven carriages are nearly completed by Adams, of the Haymarket for his Lordship.—His Lordship, like so many others of his caste, prefers living in a country where there are no corn-laws, and deriving his rents from a country where bread is taxed fifty per cent for his benefit."—*Spectator*.

men of some property, and generally men of considerable property, they will, whatever their politics, be members of the property-union, and will not be got to vote (willingly) the loosing of their own purse-strings. Why then, the people must only be decided, and allow no man to represent them in parliament who will not pledge himself to vote for the repeal of the whole of the present complicated and wasteful system of taxation, direct and indirect, and the substitution of a property-tax on realized property ; while the pressure from without must press the redemption of such pledges with a force which no property-union shall dare to resist !

Should there still be found, among the worshippers of the mammon of unrighteousness, a desperate few, not ashamed to cling to the last to the ancient standard of injustice, let such be placed by public opinion in a moral pillory, and the finger of scorn pointed at them unceasingly, till their position becoming intolerable to themselves, their very selfishness shall at length compel them to yield, that which the very same selfishness had so long induced them to hold.

ADVANTAGES OF A PROPERTY TAX.

First, a property tax would have this great advantage, that its direct operation would effectually

prevent such instances as the one just cited, of the unjust evasion of all taxes, by those whose more than just privileges cost the nation between seven and eight millions per annum in the maintenance of a standing army, maintained in a great measure to maintain those privileges; and for whose especial benefit, the most cruel of all taxes, the 50 per cent on bread is levied; and who further, to preserve their hereditary properties entire in the elder branch, charge the public, in one way or other, with the maintenance of all the younger branches of their families; whether in Army, Navy, Church, Public Department, sinecure, or pension list: for, "to dig they know not how;" though "to beg" of a minister they are not "ashamed."

The most comprehensive, however, of all the recommendations of a property tax, is that it is a direct tax, and therefore exempt from the thousand complicated mischiefs, miseries, waste of wealth already created, and hindrances to the creation of new wealth, and to improvements in trade, already shown to be inseparable from indirect taxation; which is again so intimately interwoven with monopolies and monopoly prices, that justice itself demands a simultaneous removal of all these wrongs, lest by a partial interference, the present cruel pressure be rendered still more unequal, and therefore, still more unjust.

A property tax is likewise the most humane of taxes, being levied on those, who to pay it need, at the worst, only resign some article of luxury, or of ostentation; but who need suffer no privation of life's first necessities. Neither need the revenue derived from a property tax be subject to deficiencies; as the property tax can never (as other taxes often are) be due by parties who do not possess the means of paying the demand. Wherever there is property on which to charge the per centage, there must be property from which to subtract the tax. In short, let no man, woman, or child be taxed. But instead, let every pound pay its own assurance!

A property tax is also the most just of taxes. Waving therefore all the arguments and calculations which have been brought forward to prove that property, under a system of free trade and economical government, would not suffer by paying a property tax; nay, that property must ultimately benefit, through the national prosperity which cannot fail of arising out of the beneficial changes, taken altogether, which it is proposed should accompany the laying on of a property tax; and assuming the higher ground of equal justice flowing from good-will to all, such justice pronounces, that even if property had no part in the remunerating circumstance of reduced prices; that even if public burdens could not be lightened:

that, in short, if property could not be assured at a less expense than paying the one half to assure the other, it would still be but equal justice to commute every tax direct and indirect which now exists, for one direct tax on realized property. It is, in other words, but requiring every man to pay his own said assurance. And what, but the wantonness of irresponsible power could have suggested, what but the helplessness of ignorance and poverty combined, could have submitted to a system of injustice so glaring as that of laying any part of such a burden on those who have no property to assure, and who must find it hard enough to pay, by the sweat of their brow, nature's daily tax for daily food.

Should property, however, plead that industry ought at least to contribute something towards personal protection; it is asked in reply—Do not the industrious classes contribute towards the protection of their country and its laws, those fearful war and insurrection taxes, their blood, and their lives? Are they not our soldiers and our sailors in the day of battle? their bodies the floating walls of our island empire, the living bulwarks of our modern cities? nay, the very targets against which, ignorance, in the hour of riot, flings the missile which the wantonness of power has provoked?

A property tax, again, may be collected with less expense than any other tax. But the collateral

advantages of a property tax, in constituting the tax-voting class, the tax-paying class, are yet greater than any or all that have been enumerated.

These, however, open so wide a field, that a separate chapter must be devoted to their discussion.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE MISCHIEVOUS TENDENCIES OF THE FAMILY MONOPOLY, OR LAW OF PRIMOGENITURE ; AND THE CONSEQUENT EXPEDIENCY OF ITS ABOLITION.

“ The standard of splendor might be lowered ; but that of comfort would be raised ! ” — *Dilemmas of Pride.*

PRIOR to discussing the collateral benefits of the substitution of a property tax for every other tax, it will be necessary to devote a short chapter to an exposition of the evil tendencies of the law of primogeniture ; the subject being, though too important for mere incidental mention, so intimately connected with that oppressive taxation of the industrious classes, which the substitution of a property tax for every other tax is calculated to obviate, that to enumerate the evil tendencies of the law of primogeniture, is but to complete the array of arguments in favour of the adoption of a property tax.

The law of primogeniture is, in short, at once the source both of the temptations to commit, and of the power to perpetrate public depredation.

Nay, as long as the family monopoly of primogeniture exists, the whole amount of national wealth which can be got to flow into that great reservoir, the public purse, may be said, on so doing, to become exclusively the private property of the property class: for, while ever the more than just influence which preserving properties entire in the heads of families gives to those heads of families, enables them to secure to their younger branches a preference, amounting to a monopoly, of, not only sinecures, places, and pensions, but also, of all that is worth having in army, navy, church, and even law, the taxes, and other funds, which support all these establishments, are strictly speaking, one great general subscription, or rather compulsory rate, for the maintenance of the younger branches of the property or influential class.

It is here well worthy of remark, that all but the elder sons of that class commonly considered the independent class, become, when the subject is thus viewed, in the eye of reason and common honesty, the most utterly dependent class in the whole community; the false pride of their own order, not only depriving them of their claim on the parent fund, and thus casting them, like the blue school boys, or charity school girls of a found-

ling hospital, on the subscriptions of the public ; but, by forbidding them, as they become adults, the use of their natural powers, for earning (in any honest way) their own subsistence, reducing them still further, to a continued, and hopeless species of dependence, resembling rather that of the mutilated pensioners of some hospital for the maimed, the halt, and the blind ; without, however, the respectable claims, whether for past services, or unavoidable misfortunes, possessed by such persons.

But poverty, or independence obtained by any useful species of activity would, according to the absurd verdict of that court fool in cap and bells, called Fashion, have equally excluded them from exclusive society ; the only remaining resource, therefore, was to get them billeted upon the industry of other classes of the community, and thus keep those other classes poor, despite their diligent exertions, and frugal habits, that they might be rich, notwithstanding their utter idleness, and lavish expenditure.

It is, however, but justice to believe, that few of the thoughtless beings, thus “ provided for,” (as it is called) have ever seriously reflected that their idle pursuit of pleasure, inflicts sufferings incalculable on thousands of the industrious, who are, while they ought not to be the poor. It was “ a Government appointment :” it is “ Government money,”—and “ Government money,” that is, the people’s money, the idle, pampered few,

have too long been in the habit of considering a Fortunatus's purse, which no extravagance could exhaust; a lottery fund, legally the property of whoever was happy enough to draw a prize, without a thought of where it all could possibly come from! Had these careless recipients of "Government money" been enabled, by a reasoning education, to discern the financial statements for each year truly made out, not in pounds, shillings, and pence; but in oppressive taxation's original coin; hunger, cold, and wretchedness; broken spirits, and broken hearts; rooflessness, and hopelessness; recklessness and crime; they could not, they would not have sought to draw enjoyments from sources such as these.

In short, a pampered aristocracy, in a nation, which from natural limitation of surface, and consequently of raw material, is, as may be said of Great Britain, strictly an operative nation, is exactly the species of drawback to the real prosperity of that nation, (that is, the comfort of the bulk of its population;) which an idle, prodigal son would be to both the growing rich, and the enjoyments of an industrious father, who had no means of supplying the extravagancies of his son, but the profits of his, the father's labour: he, the father, the more extravagant the son became, must, it is manifest, work the harder, and fare the worse himself, and yet still continue poor.

Such a nation, therefore, should surely maintain

as small a proportion of its population in expensive idleness as possible. While, however, the idle few not only lay on, but are permitted to appropriate the greater portion of the taxes ; and that thus they receive a bounty, as it were, on laying them on, which repays the share they have paid, and leaves an enormous balance in their own favour, and that thus the labouring many, virtually pay the whole amount levied, both for tax and bounty—who is there to protect the cause, whether of the individual operative, or of that great aggregate operative, the nation ?

These more than just privileges, however, are chiefly secured to the property class, by the undue influence, which the maintenance of the law of primogeniture, gives to the heads of families. With a more equal distribution, therefore, of property, though still among the several members of the same families who now possess overgrown fortunes ; this undue influence, with all its baneful consequences, would gradually die out ; and talent, diligence, necessary information, and, before all things honesty, become the titles for obtaining such offices of trust and emolument, as were really necessary to the service of the state ; while both the temptation to devise, and the power to pay needless situations, would be taken away.

The law of primogeniture is also destructive of happiness, inasmuch as it tends to erect and maintain a false standard of expenditure, pomp, and

ideal consequence ; which, without securing the happiness of the few, produces in the minds of the many, a sense of privation inconsistent with contentment.*

The law of primogeniture also tends, through the false pride it fosters, to demoralize and degrade the younger sons of the privileged classes, by condemning all such (who fail to obtain a government order on industry for their maintenance) to sink into a sort of supernumerary members of society subject to every species of temptation to become all that is worthless and contemptible ; fortune hunters, hangers on, gamblers,† etc. etc. ; with every thing to gain, and nothing to lose, whether at the dining or the gaming tables of the “ provided for ;” and, strange infatuation ! less ashamed of any meanness, or of any vice, than they would be of doing anything honest, by means of which they might obtain independent bread for themselves. What ! a man whose elder brother has ten, twenty, or forty thousand a year, and perhaps five thousand starving tenantry,‡ demean himself by rendering society any useful service in return for his consumption of a large portion of its luxuries ! While the same mischievous law equally demoralizes (though after another fashion) the elder sons of the

* See “ Dilemmas of Pride.”

† See “ Fortune Hunting.”

‡ See the Account of the Town of Calen, in Inglis's Travels in Ireland, in 1834.

same classes ; teaching them to shut their eyes against natural justice, and their hearts against natural affection, by the knowledge (in their very nurseries) that all their brothers and sisters are to be despoiled of their natural inheritance, to aggrandize them ! While, as they grow older, they are taught that their fraternal regard is, notwithstanding, to be exhibited, by committing a breach of the sacred trust reposed in them by a nation, and providing for their brothers, and, if possible, their sisters also, at the expense of the public ; that is, of the labouring population, on any pretext, however frivolous or false ! Nay, they are to support, with all their might and influence, ponderous establishments of every kind, which they know to be destructive of the nation at large ; merely to preserve entire, whatever allotment of the booty derived from taxation their own family may happen to possess ; and, moreover, they are to use diligently all the sophistries of which the advantages of a college education may have given them the command, to deceive the unlearned, and make them believe this miserable disposition of things, to be the invaluable British constitution, without which the very grass would not grow in the fields.

The false pride fostered by the law of primogeniture, also tends to lessen infinitely the sum of domestic happiness among the very class that law is intended to favour ; by rendering none but elder

sons "eligible matches"* in the eyes of parents, and, consequently, condemning a great portion of the property class to celibacy; and obliging those who do marry (generally speaking) to contract marriages of mere convenience.

The law of primogeniture, also, from the monopoly of property it gives to the male line, tends to degrade women, by making them dependent for happiness in private life and consideration in public life, on the caprices and interested views of men, who, had but the artificial arrangements of property been more equal, had been the ardent suitors, and willing admirers of the beauty and accomplishments, they now eschew as snares! In short, almost all the ten thousand prejudices of society detrimental to peace; almost all the thousand artificial, yet but too real miseries of our barbarously civilized, our darkly enlightened, our ignorantly educated age, may, on a strict examination of the subject in all its bearings, be traced to derive their origin, or their aliment; either directly from the provisions of the law of primogeniture itself; or indirectly, but quite as certainly, from the peace and sympathy destroying pride which that law fosters, the honour and honesty-subverting avarice which that pride again engenders; or the excessive competitions, and unnatural hatreds, to which that avarice yet again gives birth.

* See "Dilemmas of Pride."

The law of primogeniture, combined with that of entail, forms also an instrument which, though not deliberately constructed for the purpose, is too often adapted to the misuse of defrauding creditors, by preserving to children property righteously due by parents to those who have given labour, profit, on capital, and advances of capital itself in the material of their goods and wages of their workman, possibly for the maintenance, education, and advancement in life, of those very children ! Nay, there have been awful instances of fathers, who, urged by the thought of those justice-perverting laws, mingling perhaps with incipient insanity, have desperately closed their mortal career by committing suicide to set the seal to fraud, and leave their children (by the laws of man) in possession of property, which (by the laws of God) belonged to their creditors.

OBJECTIONS TO THE ABOLITION OF THE LAW OF PRIMOGENITURE ANSWERED.

It has been absurdly objected against the abolition of the law of primogeniture, that, without maintaining this law, the hereditary peerage could not be maintained. If this objection, or rather assertion, be founded in fact, it becomes an objection to the maintenance of the hereditary peerage, not an objection to the abolition of the law of primogeniture ; for, it would surely be a gratuitous

insult to the enlightenment of the nineteenth century to add any argument to prove, that what cannot be maintained without injustice, ought not to be maintained at all.

It has been also objected, that, were the law of primogeniture abolished, the actual subdivisions of land would become inconveniently small ; but this the parties concerned may surely arrange among themselves, by the payment of rent or purchase money, whenever further division ceases to be desirable, without perpetuating injustice, heartburnings, immorality, and actual misery, to avoid the distant possibility of too many hedge-rows ! It has also been said, that farming is best conducted on a large scale ; the contrary has been shown, in a former chapter,* to be, in an eminent degree, the fact. If this objection, however, were valid, it could be obviated by the same means as the objection just answered—arrangement among the parties. Late experiments, however, have fully proved † that every species of produce can be raised with greater advantage by the small cultivator than by the great farmer ; while it is quite obvious, that the fresh crops, for which it has been anticipated ‡ that,

* See Chap. XI. on the Small Allotment System, where authorities are given for every fact.

† See Reports published by Labourer's Friend Society, 1834 and 1835.

‡ See Chap. X. on Increased Value of Land under a Free-trade System.

under the blessings of free trade, a new and most extensive demand must arise, would be most productive, at the least cost, under the careful management, spade cultivation,* constant manuring, and extra weeding and watering, by otherwise unemployed wives and children, bestowed by separate small owners or cultivators and their families, on very small portions of land. It has even been shown, that there are many kinds of produce which, with only the present demand, richly repay the small allotment cultivator the time and cost of spade cultivation.†

Such a system, then, increasing with the increasing demands of growing prosperity, would probably employ profitably, on a given portion of ground, so subdivided, an infinitely greater number of agricultural labourers, and during a much greater portion of the year, than could be employed in raising corn on a large farm containing the same quantity of ground consolidated. Nor can the misery of the Irish cottager be fairly adduced as an objection to the possible prosperity of the English small allotment cultivator; the very different circumstances of the two countries forbidding the inference. In Ireland there are scarcely any manufactures, because, from the ill-governed state of the country, no speculator will invest his

* See Chapter XI. on Small Allotment System.

† See Chapter XI.

capital there ; the people, therefore, have no choice of means for obtaining the barest possible subsistence. The owner of the soil may thus be said to hold a monopoly of life itself, in holding the only possible means of procuring any species of food, even to the road-side weed, and the stick from the hedge to boil it with !* In fact, the whole population are thus driven, by the writhings of hunger, around the owner of land, and compelled to outbid each other incessantly, to get possession of any scrap of land at any rent, such merciful lords of the soil as Lord Clifden† may choose to demand, merely to have an opportunity of eating a potatoe or two, while scraping together the rest of the produce wherewith to pay this exorbitant rent, together with the tithes to the church of peace, collected at the point of the bayonet ; while there being no manufacturing population, there is no home market in which to sell that produce at any thing like a remunerating price. Yet the poor man cannot benefit by the low price of provisions, he not being able to be a purchaser at any market, but, as above stated, subsisting on the said potatoe or two of his own raising, which, at the risk of being turned out of his mud hovel by a Lord Clifden, or shot by an Archdeacon Ryder, he has ventured to reserve for his own, surely not too luxurious, consumption.

* See Inglis's Travels in Ireland in 1834.

† See Inglis's Travels in Ireland in 1834.

The relative circumstances of the parties would be very different indeed, if manufactures supplied two-thirds of the population with wages wherewith to become purchasers of food, and the other third, in consequence, with a home market in which to sell their produce ; while land being no longer the sole resource of all, no one would any longer bid a rent for land, which did not leave them a surplus profit, equal to what was to be had by manufactures ; nor labour upon land, either on their own account, or under an employer, without profit, or wages, equal to the wages of the manufacturer.* Had England then, since the commencement of her connexion with Ireland, spent in that country, in the establishment of manufactures, the same sums † only which she has expended there in the maintenance of military stations, etc. and the purchase of ammunition for the destruction of the naked and defenceless natives, that beautiful but unhappy island, had now been “ a land of promise, flowing with milk and honey,” instead of a den of strife, deluged with blood and tears ! But to return to the subject under discussion, namely, the subdivision of land, to be apprehended from

* Were these troublesome consequences apprehended by Lord Waterford when he threw every obstacle in the way of the successful cotton factory of the enlightened Mr. Malcolm ?—See *Inglis's Travels in Ireland in 1834*.

† Calculated in Tait's Magazine, March 1835, at not much short of four millions per annum.

the abolition of the law of primogeniture ; we have high authority,* (did a proposition so self-evident require the support of any authority) to show that great properties being in the hands of ostentatious proprietors, must occasion much land to be devoted to less profitable purposes, such as parks, preserves, etc. and to be less carefully cultivated, than would be the case were such properties divided among several owners. It surely stands to reason that the man who owns a few acres is more imperatively called upon to make the most of them, than the man who owns many thousand acres.

As to the ignorant cry, that, one time or other, the subdivisions, not of land only, but also of property must come down to absolute beggary, it may be answered thus : were it not for the thousand casualties of death, marriages, and acquisitions by industry, etc. which are continually uniting various portions of property, the apprehended minute division of the value, at least, of estates, if not of the land itself, would take place even under the present system ; only it would require a longer time to bring it about ; for it is not pretended, even now, that younger children are not to have any portion whatever assigned them ; however small, therefore, the portions might be, were they always going forth, and never returning, all must go at last.

* Adam Smith.

Now, though the law of primogeniture were abolished to-morrow, the casualties which unite portions of property would most of them be still in operation ; while some of them, especially acquisitions by industry, would be much more active ; the necessity of doing something for children, or of enabling them to do something for themselves, being kept more continually before the eyes of parents ; while the perpetual recurrence of the salutary subdivisions, would keep up a healthy circulation of capital, and effectually prevent those diseased, and worse than useless accumulations of wealth which now obtain, and in addition to the more serious derangements of the artificial social system already noticed, put bitter for sweet, into the cup of the great majority of the (so called) civilized world ; making restless those whose portion might be peace ; causing many blessed with competency, to believe themselves poor ; many worthy of respect, to be despised ;—nay, such is the tyranny of prejudice, almost to despise themselves : at least to be wanting in that true self-respect which is founded on qualities truly respectable, and, therefore, to cringe to gilded, or titled vice. In a word, causing the organization of the artificial social system, both in estimation and in fact, to counteract as much as possible that of the natural social system ; and thus falsifying the standard of opinion, or rather of the aggregate of those forced associa-

tions which pass for opinions, on almost every subject on which opinion has a tendency to affect contentment.

But a family must have a head, say the advocates of primogeniture. As long as it is the will of Heaven to spare the parent life, each actual family, speaking the language of common sense, has a natural head, claiming the reverence and love, and having duties to perform essential to the well-being of its members. In legal phraseology, however, fifty such families, heads and all, may be but branches to an infant head, still in its nurse's arms : with Masters in Chancery, and numberless harpy underlings of the law, appointed to protect its rights, and pocket its revenues for the next twenty years. The family house and place, the while, going to decay, with agents, housekeepers, park-keepers, and game-keepers, etc. receiving incomes for keeping them in repair ; while the immediate children of the last possessor, the aunts and uncles of the present head, robbed and cast out by the law of primogeniture, are living in hired houses or lodgings, and are most probably pensioners, great or small, in one way or other, on the industry of the wealth-creating public ; and thus deriving their subsistence from burdensome taxes, which, in such instances, may be said to be levied on actual hard labour for the maintenance, in worse than idleness, through the round about channels described,

of all the already enumerated host of mischievously employed non-productive consumers, from the said masters in chancery, down to the said housekeepers, gamekeepers, etc. who form what may be termed the staff of a minor's establishment, and who are wasting or appropriating the rents, which might have maintained the said pensioned aunts and uncles. While, if under a more wholesome organization of the artificial social system, such persons as the said masters in chancery, underlings of the law, gamekeepers, housekeepers, etc. found it necessary to apply themselves to productive industry, their efforts might have added something to national wealth ; while the properties, on the plunder of which they now live, would then have sufficed to have maintained, not only the heads of families, but the branches also, without burdening the labouring population, with those cruel taxes on first necessities, and on industry, in every shape, which, under the present system, halve their every meal, while they double their hours of toil. For, among those persons, who may be considered burdensome to the labouring population, must in strict justice, be included, as already stated, not only literal pensioners, but by far the greater number of those " provided for " in army, navy, church, and government appointments ; these establishments neither being proportioned to, nor intended to supply merely the real necessities of

the state; but, on the contrary, being both attempted to be proportioned to, and certainly intended to supply the pride-created necessities of the aristocracy.

But the case of our baby minor, it will be said, is an extreme one: be it so.—Would it, however, mend the matter much, if this great head of a great family were turned of one and twenty, and consequently engaged in giving practical proofs that he had not arrived at years of discretion, by a liberal expenditure of twenty, or thirty thousand per annum, on the maintenance of gamblers, race-horses, and opera-dancers, while his brothers were living on government orders on the industry of others; and his sisters, if plain, pining in hopeless poverty; if beautiful, marrying for establishments any one, however unsuitable in years, or dissolute in habits, who could afford to marry them, and “live like other people.”

But this, it may be urged, is another extreme case. There are too many such, however.—But let us now take one quite in the other extreme. Let our head of a family be a rare example of prudence and amiability; in short, a young man who eschews gaming tables, pays his tailor's bills, and even marries for love without regard to pelf. Still his sisters are robbed, and his brothers are obliged to rob the public; and for what? merely that himself, his wife, and his children (till his

death) may live in a style of splendour quite unnecessary to their own happiness; and most probably, that he may be enabled to expend forty or fifty thousand pounds, from time to time, in bribing and intoxicating the electors of his county to induce them to return him to parliament, however contrary his known political opinions may be to those of the majority of the constituency, or to the principles of good government.

“But,” say the advocates of the olden prejudices in behalf of pride and pageantry; if the law of primogeniture were abolished, we should see no more of the fine ancient seats and splendid domains which now adorn this country.”

This apprehension may be well founded; but if the standard of splendour were lowered, that of comfort would be raised.* If the eye of the county historian, or faithful chronicler of the deaths and marriages of ancient families, (that is of families, which for centuries had been both useless and burdensome to the public) discovered little to tempt his ingenious researches, that of the philanthropist would see much to excite his gratified sympathies, when, instead of here and there a stately mansion, deserted by its haughty or dissipated owner, and standing in the midst of solitary preserves, the haunt by day of the hired keeper, the resort by night of the desperate

* Dilemmas of Pride.

poacher, the whole face of the country had become one cheerful scene of villas, villages, cottages, allotments, gardens, and pleasure grounds ; giving every where practical evidence, if of the decline of pride, of the growth of prosperity ; if of the gradual decrease of aristocratic influence ; of the infinite increase of private happiness ; and that, not only among the now oppressed classes, but also among the aristocracy themselves.

Finally, let us refer the question of this so much dreaded minute division of property to the decision of that equal justice, which, flowing from good-will to all, has been shown to be the visibly revealed will of God : let us ask the reason which God has given us, what must be the verdict of that sacred tribunal. Let us suppose the privileged orders to bring forward proof incontestable that, without the law of primogeniture, and the auxiliary power of taxing the labouring classes for the maintenance of the younger children of the aristocracy, the subdivision of property among their own children, and grandchildren, and great grandchildren must, at last, reduce the descendants of the present privileged classes, to the ultimate necessity of losing caste, by earning their own subsistence. Would eternal justice, sitting in the judgment seat, pronounce such arguments unanswerable, and issue a decree, that the labouring classes must forego every cherished hope of amelioration, and continue to labour sixteen

hours out of the four and twenty, be poorly fed, insufficiently clothed, and without education ; that, by means of their hard earnings, and sore privations, they might be enabled to keep up a sufficient fund to maintain in idleness, luxury, and often splendour, all but one child, of each family, of each generation, of the now privileged class ; for the great and important purpose of preserving one pure specimen of each such family, as long as the world lasts, not only safe from the very apprehension of want, but from the contaminations of industry, either in their own persons, or those of their collateral branches, and, therefore entitled to despise, mortify, laugh at, and avoid, as they would contagion, every one who is, or whose forefathers ever were, of the slightest use to society. Alas ! how often has this wicked, this heartless, this thoroughly contemptible assumption of false superiority by injustice, and idleness, (absurd, and worse than baseless as its pretensions are) being vested by forced false associations, with power to render the latter days—days set apart for days of rest—days of absolute bitterness to the venerable gray-haired man, (venerable from his years, though wanting in moral courage to brave prejudice,) who had spent the vigour of his youth, in active, honest, honorable usefulness ; and looked forward, through many a weary struggle, to those very days in which he now feels himself rejected, as the goal of all his hopes ! If,

however, all such persons would but ask themselves the question, by whom are they rejected? and not, in their turn, fall into the worthless weakness of neglecting those they think they have left behind, they might yet awake from folly's influence, and be happy. Shall it then be judged a recommendation of the law of primogeniture, or an argument for its abolition, that the general tendency of maintaining that law is to preserve, in all its fruitfulness of evil, this, among so many sources of artificial suffering? Surely then, more need not be said to convince every honest mind, not only that the laws of entail and primogeniture, which now make injustice compulsory, ought to be abolished; but that, in their room, there should be laws established, making justice compulsory: such as, or at least, on the principle of the following:

First, that no settlement or legal trick of any kind should be permitted to screen any portion of a man's property, under any circumstances, from creditors to whom it is in common honesty due. And, secondly, that on the death of a father, whatever property remains, after the payment of every just debt, and a comfortable provision (for life only) for his widow, should belong (of right, without will or process) equally to all his children, male or female.

Such a return to the simplicity of natural justice would be attended by yet another distinct advan-

tage, as it could not fail, by annihilating the principal pretexts for litigation, to prove a colossal stride towards the effectual reform of those purposely created intricacies, and ruinously excessive expenses, which at present render the law, instead of the friend of the widow and the orphan, and the protector of the rights of the poor, a mere instrument of oppression in the hands of the rich, of robbery in the hands of the unprincipled, or of malice in the hands of any man who, being by some quibble of the said law entitled to throw the costs on the disputed estate, determines (with his eyes wide open) to give the lawyers on both sides, time and opportunity (inclination they always have) to divide the property among themselves, before he will admit the (always well-known to be) just claim of his opponent.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE COLLATERAL BENEFITS OF A PROPERTY TAX, OR THE ADVANTAGES OF CONSTITUTING THE TAX-VOTING CLASS THE TAX-PAYING CLASS.

“The advance of civilization has already put a stop to plunder by force ; it remains for the march of intellect to devise a check for plunder by stratagem.”—*Dilemmas of Pride*.

THIS check is our great national want. Property, as distinct from industry, ever has been, and, even under a reformed parliament, still is the maker of laws, the deviser of budgets, the voter of subsidies,—in short, the tier-up of public burdens ; property, therefore, must be charged with the carrying of those burdens : nothing less can ever inspire it with a sufficiently feeling and careful appreciation of their weight.

In our reformed parliament we have, no doubt, many honest individuals, and we shall in time, it may be fairly presumed, have many more. But, speaking of property as a body, all its prejudices, as well as all its misconceived notions of its own

interest, are opposed to the just claims of industry. Take, for instance, the obstinate blindness of landlords on the subject of corn-laws. While ever, therefore, property, as a body, can fling the greater proportion of the burdens of the state on the shoulders of industry, property, as a body, will never be brought to reflect with sufficient seriousness on the devastating effects of oppression on national prosperity.

But lay the burdens of the state exclusively, or chiefly, on already realized property—that is, make the tax-voting order the tax-paying order—and the representatives of property, whether reformers or non-reformers, would immediately feel, and therefore understand, the necessity of rendering those burdens as light as circumstances would permit. Sinécures and unnecessary offices would be abolished, and the indispensable ones remunerated moderately; or, if the property class thought fit, instead of each dividing his own possessions among his own children, to keep up, at the expense of the order, establishments in which their younger sons might still be placed to scramble for the prizes, it would become a sort of club affair, and, whether wise or not, would at least cease to be unjust to other classes. Another most essential advantage attendant upon laying the burdens of the state exclusively on already realized property, calling in always the aid of new property as fast as realized, is, that such an arrangement would not only teach

the representatives of already realized property, now the law-making order, economy, but also, which is of infinitely more importance, give them an immediate personal interest in the increase of national wealth, and therefore set them upon devices to bring about and secure general prosperity. Industry—that is to say, the immediate interest of industry—would thus, at length, be virtually represented: a privilege it has never yet possessed, and which no reform in the freedom of election, not even universal suffrage and vote by ballot, could bestow upon it. For the man who has his daily bread to earn has seldom education, never leisure, still less a legal qualification to take himself a seat in parliament, and so become the actual representative of industry; and it is in vain that by his vote, however fairly given, he sends thither a delegate who has made his fortune in the same occupation at which he is himself still a labourer; by the very fact of having acquired a fortune that delegate has ceased to be the representative of industry, and become in fact, and, what is still more important in feeling, the representative of property; it has become his supposed personal interest to devise laws for the more than just protection of already realized property generally, and special enactments securing to the property portion, or great capitalist of his own peculiar trade or calling, some unfair monopoly, calculated to oppress at once the public and the operative; and such,

therefore, has been in general the conduct pursued by what is called the great mercantile interest in the house—men who, though risen from the people, are no longer of the people. In fact, our boasted three estates have long had absolutely no existence. Whether the maintenance of such a fancied harmony, arising out of discord, is either desirable or possible, is another question. Again, the real identity of interest of the whole community is a truth which is little understood, and less acted upon. What we have at present to deal with, therefore, is the supposed separate interests of the various parties in the state; and these consist, in name only, of King, Lords, and Commons,—in reality, of King, Property, and Industry. Lords and Commons thus, instead of being two such supposed interests or estates, are united, by the possession of property, into one such supposed interest or estate; and industry, while ground into the very dust to pay whatever this united interest chooses to demand, is shut out from all particle of share in the virtual representation. And yet the national importance of already realized property, compared with industry, or the power of creating wealth, is but as that of the income of an estate for a short period compared with that of the value of the estate itself. What rents would lands pay without labour? What interest would money yield unless the principal were employed to set labour in motion? Now there is no question that what both

houses of parliament vote, constitutes law ; yet already realized property, this comparatively unimportant interest, is represented in both houses : industry, or the power of creating wealth, that stupendously important interest, not in either. Thus the great stability giving majority of the nation, whose property consists in this power of creating wealth by labour, though they send nominal representatives to parliament, have no one, with an interest felt to be identical with their own, to plead their cause in any constitutional form, except indeed the drawing up of humble petitions for that which they have a right to demand. If, therefore, neglecting the prayers of those petitions, the property-holding, corn-growing union,—being also the law-framing, place-holding, subsidy-voting, and subsidy-appropriating union—choose to make industry or labour, which it is their supposed interest to buy cheap, unprofitable, and bread, or the produce of the soil, which it is their supposed interest to sell dear, unpurchasable, and yet to take (for so doing) large salaries levied on industry,—what has industry left ?

The terrible remedy of turning the ploughshare into the sword !!!

This remedy, however, (though in reserve) gives to the rights of industry a guarantee in nature which is indestructible, the ultimate security against the wanton invasion of those rights being

vested in the physical force inseparable from numbers,

Let those then, who by education have, or ought to have wisdom, remember that such a power exists, though dormant! Let them listen to the lowest breathings of its whispers; beware of its murmurs; and never provoke it to speak out; but yield in time to the moral force of justice, ere by vain resistance they awake the slumbering giant, who, once aroused, will not lay him down again till he has fatigued himself with the work of destruction, and drank himself drunk with blood!

But repeal every tax, direct and indirect, which now exists, and substitute a tax on already realized property, and all such dangerous collision would become impossible: for, not only would property have thus no means of oppressing industry; but property, with the leisure, and, generally speaking, education which independence bestows, would acquire an interest, an immediate, apparent, easily understood, personal interest, in common with industry, an interest in enabling industry to create wealth and become property, that it might assist the property already in existence in bearing the burdens of the state.

There being but one condition, however, on which the governing, and already wealthy few, could obtain the assistance of the labouring and wealth-creating many, namely, that of spreading wealth and prosperity over the whole land, they

would set about so doing with all the ability, knowledge, and research, they could muster; and, instead of the unreal, unmeaning jargon, of three estates, or the real evil of two contending, and supposed to be opposing interests, we should have the reality of identity of interests made apparent, and therefore felt, understood, and acted upon. Thus would the "collective wisdom" of the nation be, at length, in good earnest: there would be no more "crowing like cocks," or "braying like asses," or "yelling like savages," or settling to sleep on the benches of the house, or peals of laughter during the descriptions of the distress of the labouring classes, or while propositions for amending the morals and means of the people, by putting down drunkenness, were being made, under the respectable sanction of a committee appointed for the purpose. Nor would official documents be signed without reading them, nor the house convulsed with laughter during the discussion of the pension list. When honourable members had to muster the money among themselves, they would be apt to look grave, and say to the receivers of the pensions: "those may laugh who win!"

As for the convenient jargon of affecting to reverence egregious error, and glaring injustice, merely because remnants of the olden time, and which all the world knows only means, "I have seven trumps and don't want a new deal!" such idle stumbling blocks in the path of improvement,

(when those felt the pressure who held themselves the power of redress,) would very soon be laid on the shelf of the antiquary with the idols of the ancient heathen ; and every home regulation, every foreign relation, which justice and common sense were agreed required amendment, be remodelled forthwith.

All monopolies and restrictions on trade, in other words, hindrances to the creation of wealth, would of course be abolished immediately by a parliament whose own private interest it had become to make every man in the nation (if possible) able to pay some portion of a property tax.

The early beginnings of industry would be encouraged and cherished by the state, even as a mother nourisheth her infant offspring. Protection would no longer be the portion of the strong ; oppression of the weak. But even selfishness would at length discover that the only way to secure its own best interests was to cease from falsifying the balance which might again be used in weighing to itself, and, henceforth, place in the steady hand of equal justice, standard scales, for the use and benefit of all !!

If any public departments, now sources of expense, can, by judicious arrangements, be changed into sources of revenue, such arrangements would be made without delay.

If self-supporting prisons, for instance, on the plan of the great one at Auburn, could be intro-

duced, so as at least to save expense, if not produce profit, such would be adopted.

If a national bank could be made a source of profit to the nation, it would be established.

If the charitable and educational funds already in existence, require but to be duly administered, to prove abundant for their respective purposes, the guardians of the welfare of the nation, and of their own property, would see that they were so administered. The inquiries even now being made into corporation abuses, would be vigorously followed up, and caused to produce the best possible practical results. If the labour of the able-bodied pauper, as already suggested, as well as that of the species of delinquents now sent to tread-mills or houses of correction, or caused to pass away precious months in idleness in profligate prisons, could be so beneficially employed as to afford, over and above their own maintenance, a surplus for the support of the sick and the aged, such labour would be so employed, and the funds thence derived not allowed to cling to the fingers of those entrusted either with their collection or with their distribution. Crown lands and waste land would be neither jobbed nor left waste. If, as many intelligent persons think, we ought not to incur any expense in defence of colonies which do not replace the outlay with a profit, we should no longer continue to do so, either from mistaken judgment, or the desire of

supporting patronage or corrupt jobbing.* Those whose own business it had become to economise would take care neither to make mistakes, nor show unnecessary favours. Obliging friends, or even the nearest relations at one's own expense, would be discovered to require a very different intensity of complaisance from doing the same thing at the expense of the nation.†

Ceylon offers a melancholy example of cruel and ruinous oppression to the unhappy natives and yet loss to the oppressing country, merely to enrich private monopolists, and furnish situations for officials and tax-gatherers; almost every article whether of living or of commerce being taxed to the consumer, some as high as from three hundred to six hundred per cent, yet the balance on the expenses of the colony being greatly against the mother country.‡ All can see the folly as well as

* "It is quite monstrous," says Stuart, "that we the over-taxed inhabitants of Great Britain, should allow part of the sums annually drawn from us to be expended for the support of establishments in Canada, a country which not only makes us no return, but has the address to impose on us a bad article at a greatly increased price."—*Stuart's America*.

† "For statistical facts proving at a glance the madness of crippling our trade with the rest of the world, to bolster that of the Canadas and the West Indies, and the mischievous effect on our home prosperity of every part of the protective system."—*See The Statistical Annual of the Board of Trade, or a Budget of Facts*.

‡ "Among the civil charges, seem not to be included those of

cruelty of such misrule, and mismanagement combined: yet the grievances continue, and why? Because those who feel them to be grievances have not the remedy in their own hands. But, if property had to pay the balances itself, self-interest so sharpens wit, that the few, who could more than repay themselves by colonial offices, would find it impossible to mystify the understandings, and gain the votes of all the rest.

In short, whatever might be for the advantage of the public would quickly be discovered by a body of intelligent, well educated men, whose own immediate interest was at stake, who were, in fact, administering their own funds, settling their own

the agent in England, for pensions and stores, £26,735. Among the military charges are *not* included arms, accoutrements, clothing, ammunition, transport of troops, and the half-pay and pensions of the force serving in Ceylon. So much for Colonial accounts. But even according to the Colonial mode of making up accounts, which like Colonial currency, must always be taken at a heavy discount, the expenditure for twelve years ending 1832—all years of profound peace—exceeds the revenue by no less a sum than £412,641: which it is needless to say falls on the people of England."

"The Civil Establishment is enormous, six and twenty appointments from one to three thousand each; the governor £8000; exclusive of pensions to retired judges and other civil functionaries amounting to £16,000 per annum.

"The Revenue Establishment costs £63,000 per annum; a charge of collection of near nineteen per cent. The staff, including the Engineer Department, costs nearly £25,000 per annum."—*Spectator*, 9th of August, 1834.

accounts, to sum up all, taking care of their own purses. An office, the duties of which chancellors, in general, pronounce marvellously few men incapable of performing, considering that poets and philosophers assert that all men are more or less deranged.

But the misfortune has been, that the real business for which, till very lately, at least, all parliaments have met, has been to distribute among themselves and their connexions, places and pensions, and to devise and lay on taxes for the keeping up of the fund, out of which the emoluments of such places and pensions were paid, taking care that the burden of those taxes should fall as exclusively as was likely to be endured on industry, the ranks of which they thought fit to pronounce "the lower," and, therefore, never intended that either themselves or their children should join.

Any other acts of the legislature have generally been points yielded, at last, yet in haste, to clamour from without, or to the wily arguments of an interested faction within, but neither considered nor understood by members in general, who had, as already remarked, their own all-absorbing arrangements to attend to, and who, therefore, when they interfered with the welfare of the country in general, as by the permission of monopolies, or the sanction of restrictions injurious to trade, etc. resembled the directors of a joint stock company

exercising power over concerns in which its members have not a sufficiently strong individual interest, and, therefore, doing mischief: the difference on their own single share of the legal dividend of national prosperity, not being, under the "disposition of things" which has hitherto obtained, worth near so much to each individual director, as the privilege of permitting their own families, connexions, and followers, to plunder with impunity from the whole. But, if the burdens of the state were laid on property only, and that the aid of industry could not be obtained in bearing those burdens, but by causing the trade of the nation to flourish, and industry to become property, the general weal would become to each individual of the property class, a subject too important to be trifled with.

Men of property, therefore, would not merely take care how they voted away their own money, but they would no longer go into parliament without having learned so much as the A. B. C. of political economy. The social science, on the contrary, would become the study, the business of the hitherto idle classes, while a little honesty of intention, aided by keen scented self-interest, would, in a short time, unravel all the reputed difficulties of a subject which, like the simple precepts of pure practical religion, has been mystified by those who would not see a path they did not choose to tread.

The industrious classes, the while, instead of wasting precious time, and inducing dangerous excitement, by assembling in thousands to petition for justice, might follow their own peculiar calling (the creation of wealth by labour) with thorough singleness of purpose, certain, that without their interference, their best interests were being considered by persons fitted by education to understand the most difficult questions in all their bearings, and, what is a still better security, who could not benefit themselves, but by first benefiting them.

This is the centre jewel, the very vital spark of the principle of a property tax. This, it is, which must not be lost sight of, and this it is which, in any mixed system of taxation, would be endangered.

By pressing this consideration, as invaluable, no offence to individuals, or even to any individual class, is contemplated. The average of every class, as a body, follows, to the best of its knowledge and ability, what it conceives to be its own immediate interests. To identify, therefore, the interests of every other class of the community, with that of the class whose peculiar province it is to legislate, or rather to render that identity of interest which always must exist, so practically obvious that all must perceive it, is assuredly one of the most effectual securities for good government. In short, it

converts, at once, the intricate machinery of legislation, hitherto so difficult to manage, into one great self-acting engine, which needs but to have this its main spring kept in constant repair, to work well as long as the world lasts.

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The principle of a mixed system of control must not be forgotten. It is in which, in the opinion of the author, would be unduly

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CHAPTER XV.

PLAN OF A PROPERTY TAX.

“ Every tax ought to be so contrived as both to take and to keep out of the pockets of the people as little as possible, over and above what it brings into the public treasury of the state.”

Adam Smith.

By a property tax on realized property is meant a yearly per centage on the rents of all lands and buildings, and on the interest of all sums of money, whether placed on mortgage, in the funds, or lent out on any other security. And also that all other realized property, being valued at its market price, the interest of the capital sum that such property would bring, if sold, should also pay a per centage, the interest chargeable with such per centage, to be calculated at what such capital sum would bring, if placed in the funds. All per centages on rents and interests to vary according to the nature of the property.

The interest of money on mortgage, or in the funds, being the property least expensive to its

owner, and least serviceable (at least at its owner's risk) to the state, should pay the highest per centage. Rents the next.

The man, again, who has a capital embarked in business, should pay per centage only on the amount of interest which that capital would have borne if lodged safely in the funds. The profits of his trade or business should balance against the risks, and be all his own, till by accumulation they become capital or realized property. The per centage, too, should be somewhat lower than that on the interest of the capital, the owner of which runs no risk, that every encouragement be given to those at whose risk capital is employed in putting productive industry in motion. Indeed, whenever the wealth of the nation shall become so great as to admit of such a further improvement, it would be desirable that capital embarked in business should be exempt from the tax.

A man engaged in a profession, to which no fixed salary is attached, should pay a per centage only on the rent or interest of whatever realized property he possesses, independent of his profession, but nothing on the casual wages of his anxious daily labour, whether of brain or limb, and if his profession be the medical profession, what with hasty journeyings, weary watchings, uncertain hours, and infected atmospheres, too often accompanied by the risk both of life and health.

If his professional income be large, it will speed-

ily accumulate into the species of property which it is proposed should be liable to taxation. If it be no more than he deems it expedient to spend in living and bringing up his family, and ensuring his life for their future support, such of the idle, as may have smaller incomes, and who therefore enjoy fewer luxuries, yet pay a property tax on that smaller income, would have no right to look on the immunity of the professional income with an envious eye; they too are at liberty to exert themselves, and add, if they please, the income of industry to the income of property, paying tax on the one, and not on the other, yet enjoying both; if they prefer idleness and one income, they have no right to complain, and should be thankful that they have the option which the man without realized property has not.

Fixed salaries, again, as they ought to be the wages of labour, ought, in this sense, to be entitled to some indulgence, though they must, in justice, be distinguished from the uncertain emoluments of casually rewarded professions, remembering always that the so-situated professional man has no superannuation or retiring pension to hope for,* and that, though he may, at the sacrifice of a portion of the wages of his labour, ensure his life for the benefit of his family, he cannot insure

* No £6000 per annum, with a reversion to a son.

his health, and may live to suffer want on a bed of sickness.

But as there are many kinds of fixed salaries, they must all be brought down to the reasonable wages of indispensable services, and also proportioned to free trade or natural prices, before they can claim even partial immunity. The reason why they must be proportioned to free trade prices, is, because they are fixed; whereas casual remuneration of every kind, professional or otherwise, is in the market, and, therefore, may and ought to be left to find its own level.

Fixed salaries, thus regulated, might (if the produce should prove worth the levying) be taxed without injustice, a small per centage on the interest of the capital sum for which, was their sale permitted, and the holder preferred idleness, they would sell; the interest calculated at what that capital sum would bring, if lodged in the funds, for to that extent only, they may be considered realized property.

In like manner every business, the good-will of which would sell for a certain sum, were its owner to prefer idleness and dispose of the same, might (if such minute following out of the system should prove indispensable to the exigencies of the state) be taxed a small per centage on the interest which that sum, if placed in the funds would produce, for to that amount it is a species of realized property, and a species enjoying in a peculiar

degree, the protection of the state. The freedom from indirect taxes, and all other direct taxes, except this property tax, would still, it is reasonable to hope, be an ample relief to this portion of the industrious community. A man's own peculiar skill or ability, which he could not transfer, therefore could not sell, is not to be taken into the account as property. Time enough for such advantages to become profitable to the state when they have enabled their possessor to realize tangible property.

It would, however, be far better, because simpler, and because a still greater relief to industry in every stage, that nothing but independent realized property should, even from the first, pay the property tax. But this is a point which must depend on the amount of revenue it would be practicable so to raise. Or, possibly, when the subject shall have received the deep consideration from practical men, which its importance challenges, it may be found advisable, even though sufficient funds could not be raised by the limited property tax, rather to call in the aid of some second simple direct tax, than by a strained definition of realized property, to give to the property tax a complicated character.

A graduated property tax, though proposed elsewhere* seems, on a closer investigation, to

* Dilemmas of Pride.

be attended with so many inconveniences, that probably it might be best, and most in accordance with vested rights, to vary the per centage only on the kind of property, the same kind paying the same rate of per centage whatever be the amount of the property. The greater incomes would still pay their due proportion more than the smaller ones ; and property itself, without regard to whose hands it might be in, be the direct object of taxation. The whole of the per centages, of course, to be computed on a scale or scales, calculated to cover the necessary public expenditure, and all, in proportionate degrees, rising or falling at the closing of the financial accounts for each year, something on the present plan of most local rates, and, consequently, as the wealth of the nation, fostered by free trade and free institutions, increased, becoming lighter and lighter still, till the trifling per centage, which on the whole immense mass, would still make up the sum required, would be, to each individual possessor of property, but a mere fractional charge, or peppercorn quit rent.

The first general valuation, with ratings accordingly, once regulated, increase or decrease of rateable property, might be ascertained by returns sent to be filled up, resembling those now in use respecting assess taxes, and the parties in like manner subject to surcharge for false returns ; and as a further security, no transfer or investment of pro-

perty to be valid till such return be made, nor any amount above such return (till made in a fresh return) to be recoverable at law, from the party in possession or use thereof.

All, or much of this however, would probably be found unnecessary, as in general the property would be the mark, whoever was its owner, private agreements being sufficient to regulate the ultimate incidence of the tax. But as to the mode of collection, be it arranged how it may, it can hardly be attended with difficulties amounting to any thing like an objection. For the collection of one direct tax can scarcely be made as intricate and expensive as the machinery required for the regulation, and collection of the customs, and excise, with the preventive service, and the assess taxes to boot: so that something in the way of simplicity and economy must be gained.

CHAPTER XVI.

A POLL TAX SUGGESTED IN AID OF A PROPERTY TAX,
(IF NECESSARY,) AS LESS MISCHIEVOUS THAN THE
CONTINUATION OF INDIRECT TAXATION.

ON fairly weighing the facts and calculations which have been brought forward in the foregoing pages, drawn as they are from the most respectable authorities, it seems but reasonable to hope, that low or natural prices, considered together with the remission of all other taxes, the majority of the property class would not, even at first, find their burdens much, if at all increased by taking upon themselves, in the shape of a property tax, the whole sum, which, with strict economy and freedom from the cost of collection, would still continue to be the necessary public expenditure; while the entire relief thus afforded to the industrious classes would enable multitudes of them to become wealthy enough to be liable to, and therefore assist in paying the said property tax.

If, however, before the rich fruits of this hoped for prosperity have time to ripen, and rates and prices to find their level, the burden on the property class should be found oppressive, it would surely be better to draw assistance from almost any other more general but equally direct tax ; such as, perhaps, a poll tax, than to keep up any part of the present wasteful and destructive system of indirect taxation. Or should it even prove advisable to keep up a poll tax in constant aid of a property tax rather than render the property tax complex, neither of these direct taxes would be open to the principal objections against all indirect taxes. And when we consider that the population of Great Britain is already twenty-five millions, it would appear that a poll tax might be made very productive, without being very oppressive. With the blessings of free trade, full employment, necessities below half price, and no other tax, one pound a year could be no great object to even the mere operative or labourer who was at all industrious.

Parishes might possibly be rated to make up for their defaulters, such as their poor and the children of their labouring classes ; or wealthier classes, such perhaps as persons in prosperous business, but not liable to the simplified property tax, might pay double or treble to keep up the average. Or it might be no bad plan in country parishes, to make absentee landlords pay for all the defaulters through

poverty of their parishes, the poverty being, in all probability, caused by their absence. Witness Irish landlords spending every shilling of their rents in London, and at English watering places, and allowing middle men to oppress their more than half-starved tenantry. And English nobles scattering their princely revenues over France, Germany, and Italy.

In London, and other great towns, it might be well to marry each parish consisting chiefly of the dwellings of the poor, to one of those consisting entirely of the houses of the very rich, it being obvious that the entirely poor parishes could not, without oppression, pay for their own defaulters, and that, without some such regulation as this amalgamation of parishes, the very wealth which makes the duty of assisting the poor doubly imperative, would furnish the title of exemption from its performance.*

If the averages of the pound per head were thus kept up, it would of course, at the present population, be twenty-five millions at once.† As the population, which always keeps pace with pros-

* Gentlemen and noblemen with great retinues should, of course, pay the tax on all their servants male and female.

† So that, if the fifteen millions of improvable waste land, already alluded to, were made to yield a rent of even one pound per acre to the state, we should have forty millions of revenue, without oppression to the poor, or any interference with, or hindrance to trade.

perity, increased, it might be found sufficient to charge adults only with the poll tax ; and, surely, any man or woman who can earn a livelihood could, with a very trifling additional exertion, earn one pound a year more, particularly when they could procure full employment, and purchase first necessities at half-price. In short, as not only population, and the comparatively useless wealth which collects in masses rapidly progressed, but that every labouring man thus found his resources doubled, the whole fifty millions, while raised by any means unattended with collateral mischiefs, would very soon cease to be felt at all, much less looked upon as a burden of national importance. A considerable portion, however, of the fifty millions, as has been already shown, would, under the new arrangement, cease to be required.

Lastly, it is necessary to remark before quitting this part of the subject, that, if a property tax is not to be the sole tax, it becomes important that the sum to be raised by the poll tax, or any other assistant tax or taxes, should be a definite sum, and that the property tax should be the one to vary with the exigencies of government ; so that, on the grounds already explained at full length in the chapter on the collateral benefits of making the tax voting class the tax paying class,* the

* Chap. XIV.

whole difference between a prudent and an imprudent management of the public expenditure, should fall on the class who both vote the public money into the Exchequer, and afterwards direct its disbursement.

In a country so miserably circumstanced as Ireland, it is very evident that almost the whole of such a tax would fall on landlords. It would also fall the heaviest on absentee landlords : which would be just, as the operation of such a tax would be to aid the operation of poor laws, in compelling landlords, whose sympathies have unhappily stopped short in the first stage of production, to care for the well-being of their tenants ;—which leads to the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

POOR LAWS FOR POOR IRELAND.

“ And God said, behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed ; to you it shall be for meat.”

SHALL Ireland have Poor Laws ? See Inglis’ Travels in Ireland in 1834 ; see his account of a “ town in the county of Kilkenny called Callen,” and the question, shall Ireland have poor laws, will have had its reply.

The sooner, no doubt, that just legislation can cause the necessity for parish relief to disappear every where the better ; but the starving man, the while, must not, any where, be without some resource !

Is it not a cruel mockery ! Nay, an awful blasphemy ! an insult to the God of justice, and of truth, to talk of “ rights”—“ vested rights”—

“rights of property,” and under the cloak of these prostituted terms dare to legalize an artificial social system, by the sanction of which five thousand human beings, without one claim (allowed by man) upon the soil on which they were born, in a country where there is no market for their only commodity, their labour; unfed, unhoused, unclothed, uninstructed, (for life or for eternity) from year to year, and from generation to generation; scarcely alive, literally crawl through a miserable, degraded existence, on that portion of the county of Kilkenny, which such laws have set apart for the sole maintenance of an individual called Lord Clifden; the occupation, the while, of these five thousand of God’s rational creatures being to scrape from the earth, by incessant, nerveless toil, on terms which do not always afford them even a bare subsistence on dry potatoes—twenty thousand pounds per year, to be sent to England to this Lord Clifden and by him expended in the pomp and glitter of ostentatious absenteeism. While, in addition to this rack-rent of twenty thousand pounds a year, this christian landlord is said (it scarcely seems credible) to have the callousness of heart, to wring two hundred and fifty pounds per annum more, from these his famishing fellow creatures, in the shape of a toll on all the potatoes and buttermilk, which enter among the ranges of mud hovels, in many instances only holes in a bank of mud, without one wooden stool for furniture, called the town of Callen, and not

one shilling of which toll money is spent on, or in the town.*

Are these then the “vested rights”—the “sacred (sacred indeed!!!) rights of property”—this the “happy and prosperous state of things preserved to us by our invaluable constitution,” which the susceptible consciences of members of Parliament tremble at the mention of interference with? Ye timid of heart, be reassured! For, until a new prophet shall descend from on high, and shall inform us, that the Eternal One has abdicated the Throne of Heaven, and that henceforth the laws of men shall supersede the laws of God, Injustice can never be a Right!!!

When indeed, there shall have been fixed a fair rate of rent, established under ameliorated national circumstances; not wrung from the imperious necessities of a people, who being without manufacturing employment have no varied means of obtaining a livelihood, and are therefore obliged to promise as rent whatever terms the extortioner † requires, that they may, as already noticed in a former chapter, ‡ have the opportunity afforded them, while tilling the ground, of eating a few of the

* See Inglis' Travels in Ireland, in 1834.

† Generally middlemen, who renting the land themselves from landlords, underlet it to labourers. In an instance on the property of a member of the writer's own family, land in the county of Limerick, not in the vicinity of any town, was let by the landlord at the moderate rent of two pounds per acre, and under-let by the middleman at the exorbitant rent of ten guineas per acre, to poor creatures to grow potatoes. ‡ Chapter XIII.

potatoes it yields to their labour, though at the risk of being driven out of their wretched huts to die on the road side, if the remainder of the crop will not pay the said promised rent.

And when the establishment of poor rates for Ireland shall have compelled landlords to live at home, and look to the welfare of their tenants, or have no surplus coming to themselves as rent, and that, in consequence, the five thousand inhabitants of Callen have comfortable houses, commodious furniture, decent clothing, wholesome food, and rational education, let the residue of the above named twenty thousand, two hundred and fifty pounds a year, be the "vested right" of Lord Clifden, or whoever may then be his representative.

Three things, in short, Ireland must have !

Extensive manufactures, to put an end to the ruinous competition for land just described.*

Poor laws to compel landlords to act, if not to feel like christians.

And relief from the oppressions of the Church of Rathcormac, with its widows' houses steeped in blood for altars ; its widows' sons, slain on their mother's hearths, for human sacrifices ; its dragoons for ministering high priests, and the eternal fast it imposes on the poor, to furnish forth an everlasting feast of pomps and vanities for the rich.

* Why then, does Lord Waterford throw every obstacle in the way of the successful Cotton Factory of the enterprising Mr. Malcomson.—See Inglis' Travels in Ireland, in 1834.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON CHURCH TEMPORALITIES AND CHURCH REFORM.

“Beware of the Scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; which devour widows’ houses, and for a show make long prayers; the same shall receive greater damnation.”—*Luke xx. 46, 47.*

“*Shylock*—An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven;
Shall I lay purgery on my soul?
No, not for Venice!”

ON the subject of the appropriation of the surplus Irish church temporalities, it is difficult to understand why there should be scruples.

The original tithe was chargeable with the repairs of churches, the maintenance of the clergy, and the maintenance of the poor. All other property, either willed or granted to the church, equity would pronounce to be intended for the usual, that is, for the same purposes.

The clergy taking to themselves the whole has always been a misappropriation. This abuse, therefore, calls loudly for correction; and the clergy

and the repairs of the churches being moderately and modestly provided for, the poor should be, in equity, heirs or residuary legatees to the remainder in every parish, as well as to the national surplus occasioned by there being many places having no protestants and no churches, and therefore requiring no church of England clergy. While those persons, whose scruples on this important subject are really conscientious, should call to mind, that he in whose name they deem it piety to devote the revenues of the church to what they consider strictly ecclesiastical purposes, has himself distinctly established the principle, that whatsoever is devoted to the relief of the poor is devoted to the service of the church. In that remarkable picture of the last judgment, where the Saviour represents himself saying to the righteous on his right hand, who had fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and visited the sick, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : for I was hungered, and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; naked, and ye clothed me ; I was sick, and ye visited me ; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." And then, that there should be no room for misapprehension, closes the striking lesson by adding expressly, "In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,"

he surely identifies, throughout all ages since and to come, the wants of the poor with the holiest offices of the church : a principle which some of the most sacred rites of the present church of England would seem to recognize, when that church proves, by its ordinances, that it deems it no sacrilege to bestow on the poor, whatever, after the administration of the holy sacrament, may remain of the sacramental bread and wine which have been sanctified to purposes of the church. Can any church property be more sacred to purposes purely religious than these holy symbols on which a renewal of the original blessing has been solemnly invoked by the kneeling priest, in presence of the silently praying congregation, and which have been actually laid upon the altar of God ?

Had these holy relics been heaps of the Mammon of unrighteousness, there is surely no uncharitable inference, not justified by the circumstances of the case, in suspecting that having been once the property of the church, they would have been deemed too holy for the unsacerdotal poor, and that, consequently, churchmen would have felt themselves compelled, by the dictates of their consciences, to have appropriated them to their own use ; and that, in this pious resolve, they would have been supported by the conscientious votes and speeches of too many of such of their noble or

influential relatives as might chance to have positions in the cabinet, or seats in either house of Parliament.*

But to return: where there is neither church nor protestant, there are still the poor; and if there be a christian who would pause ere he extended relief derived from the church to the poor, without the pale of the church, let him re-peruse the parable of the good Samaritan.

As, however, it would not be expedient to offer to particular districts a premium for deserting the protestant Church, by giving any greater portion of relief to parishes having no protestants than to those with protestant congregations, the surplus Church revenues and Church property derived from parishes requiring few or no protestant churches, should form a general, national fund for the relief of the destitute all over Ireland. The claim to relief to be founded on necessity, not on local situation.

* As though those zealous advocates of the Church had never read the nineteenth article of their own faith, which would have informed them, that "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men." The congregation, therefore, not the clergy, constitute the Church; while, who are the "faithful," God must decide—for the commandment, "Judge not that ye be not judged," forbids us the use of that judgment in condemning the faith of others, which we are yet bound to use for the purifying of our own individual belief, on all such points as God has been pleased to place within the reach of human reason.

This fund might be employed with infinite advantage in founding great public works, calculated to bring about the permanent relief of the poor, through the effectual medium of permanent, profitable employment ; such as extensive home colonization,* with some great and well ordered manufacture, to be established in the very heart of each colony, that thus, the agricultural and manufacturing population might become a mutual market to each other, and reciprocally supply each other with necessaries and decencies : till at length the unfurnished mud hovels of Callen should disappear and make way for commodious, cleanly, thriving towns and villages, with orderly, industrious, well fed, and well clothed inhabitants; great care being at the same time taken, that these towns and villages should be amply supplied with schools, in which the rising generation might receive a wholesome, practically religious, and moral education, carefully cleansed from all the unchristian fanaticism of party spirit.

One more precaution is quite necessary, namely, that in all those arrangements, there be no jobbing! That is, that no rich, therefore influential man, or influential man's minion, should, on any pretext of inefficient services, or for want of proper supervision, be allowed to perpetrate the sacrilege, of misappropriating any portion of this sacred fund.

* See Home Colonization.

The profits on all manufacturing concerns founded with the money of the Christian church fund, should, of course, be carefully applied to keeping up that fund, and extending its usefulness, if possible, into every corner of a now miserable, starving, dragoon trampled island.

Can any man living lay his hand on his heart and truly declare, that he thinks it would be more holy, more just, and more acceptable in the sight of God, that the whole revenue of the Irish church, however disproportionate, should continue to be, as a point of conscience, heaped upon, and expended in idle pomps and excessive luxuries by a few highly connected church men, than that it should be devoted to pressing purposes of Christian charity, and the supply of human wants, such as those just enumerated.

The remaining question (one which applies as much to the English church as to the Irish) seems to be, what proportion of the church property is, in the sight of God, the property of the poor? or, by what rule of right, in harmony with the laws of God, should the joint property be, at all times, distributed? The spirit of primitive christianity would certainly reply: let each flock have one modest, unpretending shepherd, whose treasure shall be in heaven, and who would deem it a sacrilegious robbery of the altar, to appropriate to his own individual use, any more of a fund sacred to the service of God, and, therefore, to the

necessities of the poor, than was really necessary to the supply of his simplest wants. Every flock should also be furnished with a commodious, but plain and not unnecessarily expensive church, and all that remains of church property after this, instead of being impiously considered the personal property, even for life, of church men, should be held sacred, a holy thing, once offered to God, and, therefore, unalienable from his children the poor.

What is, in fact, the legitimate object of the connexion of the Church with the State? What, but to furnish these rights of the widow and the orphan with a sufficiently powerful temporal guardian, to do justice between the poor, and therefore helpless, and their ecclesiastical pastors, whose human frailty might else subject them to the temptation of appropriating more than their just share of this joint property.

When, therefore, the Church is thus connected with the State, the Church property is, by that connexion, vested in the state, as in a trustee for certain sacred purposes, namely, the spiritual wants of all the subjects of the State, and the physical wants of all who are, or shall, at any time, become the destitute. That State, then, is guilty of a most culpable breach of trust, and inexcusable neglect of stewardship, which permits any portion of that sacred fund to be appropriated to any secular purpose, such as the secular luxuries, and

secular pomps of church men, or, in short, any expenditure by them, not necessary to their efficiency as preachers of God's truth.

A perfect equality of clerical provision would also have a most salutary effect on church men themselves, as it would put an end to that political intrigue and unchristian scramble on the one hand, and to those over anxious worldly cares on the other, which now unsanctify the ministers of the church: when, neither worldly baubles could be attained by any, nor worldly wants apprehended by any, all would be more likely to devote themselves, with singleness of heart, to the holy and peaceful duties of their sacred calling.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHERE SHOULD POWER BE VESTED, IN THE HANDS
OF THE FEW ? OR, IN THE HANDS OF THE MANY ?

To answer this question correctly, the prior very simple questions must first be put and replied to.—What is the origin, and what the use of vested power ?

The origin of vested power is to be traced in the impossibility of man, without association, defending himself, or the acquisitions of his labour, from the aggressions of selfishness ; the use of vested power, is to secure to all men, and the acquisitions of their labour, protection from the aggressions of selfishness.

But this necessity for association being visibly of God's ordination, evidently that the meeting of this necessity might effect certain moral purposes,* the conventional laws intended to meet this necessity, are thus both commanded and defined by God, and have a standard of fitness, referable to the visible laws of God, by which they may be

* See Preliminary view of the Philosophy of Happiness.

tried.* If conventional laws do not meet this necessity, neither effect the moral purpose intended, or still worse, if they aggravate this necessity, and produce an immoral effect, they are evidently wrong. Try the question, where should power be vested by this test?

The object then of association, is to constitute some representative or representatives of the interests of all, and vest in that representative or those representatives, a power to enforce the equal justice, which, through the abuse of free-will, individuals might be tempted to warp in their own favour.

But do the few constitute a fitting representative of the interests of all? On the contrary, is not the aggregate free-will of the few, liable to all the same temptations to commit injustice, to which individual free-will is subject; while the few possess, from union, more both of physical and of influential power to execute the wrong; enabling them to commit greater wrong, and rendering struggles with them to prevent the wrong, or restore the right productive of greater mischiefs. The free-will of the few, is also less subject to the moral check of opinion, than that of any individual, as by union they keep each other in countenance, and by convention, not only affix palliative terms to the

* For any provision for which there is a visible necessity in nature, is thus both commanded and defined by the God of nature.

wrongs they commit, but constitute disapprobation of their conduct a crime.* Thus, too, their own consciences, or that moral sense which the natural social circumstances of man were ordained by God to produce, for the prevention of the abuses of free-will, and perfecting, by that prevention, of intellectual natures for eternity, is, in their case, more strongly warped by unfavourable artificial circumstances, than it could be in that of unassociated individuals.

In short, the few are rendered, by union, both more able, and more disposed than any unassociated individuals could be, to commit that abuse of free-will, which consists in seeking to gratify the unjust desires of shortsighted selfishness; and, to prevent which, association was entered into, and power constituted. Power then, vested in the hands of the few, is an aggravation of all the evils, moral and physical, attendant upon the necessity for free-will, but intended by the Creator to be made instruments of good, by the moral influences of association. Nor does the evil, as the unhappily both ignorant and poor are prone to imagine, consist in vesting power in this, or that particular class or order; but, in confiding the virtue undermining trust to any few. In England, 'tis true, legislators are landowners, therefore the English

* Or, at least an inordinate development of the organ of distinctiveness.

are cursed with corn-laws: but in France, legislators are trading monopolists, therefore the French are cursed with restrictions on the importation of manufactured goods; thus clearly proving that the cry against aristocratic oppression is more than just.—If any few must rule, in other words, if the people must have tyrants and despoilers, let them have well-bred ones by all means: in the days of high-way robbery, the polite and gallant prototype of Paul Clifford must have been a much less intolerable nuisance than the common road side ruffian.* To vest power, however, in the hands of any few, is actually to create, and locate in the midst of the community, a gigantic, insatiate monster, with human desires, but super-human powers, which, to avoid battle with, the people are obliged to feed with immense contributions, deducted from the sum of common prosperity!!! Nay, power vested in the hands of any few, less perfect in wisdom and benevolence than the Almighty himself, is a sort of frightful realization of the vague and contradictory combination of attributes, ascribed by the demon worshipper to his terrific idol, whom he believes to be a being, with all the evil propensities to which the abuse of free-will renders mortals liable, yet immortal, and gifted with an impious mockery of that power which belongs only to the Deity; but using that power for evil, and

* No argument this, surely, for keeping up the ancient institution of highway robbery.

demanding, as propitiatory sacrifices, offerings of outraged justice, and of human blood.*

But let power be vested in the safe keeping of an intelligent many, and though they should all combine to use their united power, as the few have hitherto done, for their own benefit, and that of each other, though their motives should be no purer than those of the few, and though their desires should be as unjust—the very combination of the many involves the yielding up of the unjust portion of each individual desire, for how else is the very essence of combination, general consent, to be obtained. Thus, power vested in the hands of the intelligent many, is (what association was intended to produce) power to prevent, without power to commit wrong.

While the habit of recognizing and yielding to this rational and moral necessity of pruning off the unjust portion of each individual desire before general consent can be obtained, must necessarily raise the standard both of moral feeling, and of public opinion, till the averages of both would

* Witness Rathcormac, Manchester, and Bristol. Witness the Bastille, the Inquisition, the Auto da Fé, and the fires of Smithfield. Witness all warfare, civil and political; and every unjust institution, whether protection, restriction, or monopoly; all of which are, at once, the fruitful sources both of misery and of crime; and all of which have emanated from power vested in the hands of the few.

be found, always ready to fling themselves into the scale which wanted weight, to render justice equal. And thus would that moral sense, to generate which for eternity* the world was created, and the whole course of God's providence ordained, be finally perfected. While in the mean time, the benefit of the many, being the general good, and the general good, being national prosperity, it follows, that national prosperity would be secured by the many, if tolerably intelligent, agreeing together, even on mere temporal views, to benefit themselves and each other. And, that the result of such a combination, instead of being, as that of the combination of the few now is, universal misery, would necessarily be universal prosperity. For, though an individual may enrich himself unjustly at the expense of others, and so may, still more easily, the associated few by agreement, enrich themselves and each other, at the expense of the many, and continue to do so in perpetuity, while ever the many (who are the creators of wealth) submit through ignorance, and the less they find it impossible to retain of the wealth they have created, increase the more their efforts to create new wealth, which again melts from their grasp, and glides away into that perpetually running stream, the level of which, the associated few have, by complicated subtleties, contrived to incline towards the mighty reservoir of the golden floods

* See Preliminary View.

of which, to the very droppings, they possess exclusively the disposal, and, with scarcely, if indeed any exception, exclusively the use.

But the associated many, on the contrary, never could, by any possible abuse of vested power, make themselves and each other rich at the expense of the few ; for, the whole existing property of the few would be but a drop to the ocean, amid the wants of the many, and if once, through ignorance appropriated, there never could be any more to appropriate, the few not being creators of wealth, and continuing to be the rich, only because the many continue to create wealth, which, on conditions dictated by the subtlety of the few, to the ignorance of the many, is, as fast as created, transferred to the few. The many, therefore, it cannot be too often repeated, could not associate, with one accord, to make themselves and each other rich, by any but the legitimate means of general national prosperity ; for the obvious reason, that they have no one to prey upon but each other, and the moment they begin to prey upon each other, association and combination would be at an end, and they would cease to be the many, and this has hitherto been the case whenever the many have obtained a power of authority, disproportioned to their power of knowledge. But the partial, occasional outbreaks of ignorance and excited passions, driven wild by oppression, are not, as the whole tenor of the argument must show, the species of exer-

tions of power by the many here contemplated; but the systematic operation of a principle, set in motion by an enlightened nation, after deliberately deciding what principle it was safest to sanction and set in motion; and, at the same time, so carefully guard, by the two great bulwarks of liberty, perfect freedom of representation, and the universal diffusion of knowledge, that no few could ever again seize upon, much less be permitted to abuse any portion of power.

From all that has been said, it is self-evident, that the many, of a community thus intelligently acquainted with its own best interests, would be subject to no adequate temptation to wrong the few, or, in fact, to offer them any source of dissatisfaction, save only the refusal of all demands, more than just, upon the creations of industry. For, let but the rights of industry be placed on an honest basis, and the rights of property become the common cause of all, none, under such happy circumstances, being without a reasonable hope of one day realizing property, which, after having earned honestly, they must naturally wish to enjoy peaceably. Power then, vested in the hands of the many, strengthens every incentive to prevent, yet takes away every motive to commit wrong; and thus becomes, at length, the willing instrument of that visible will of God, which is good-will to all. But liberty, in the keeping of ignorance, is like a purse of gold in the hands of a child;

if force do not rend it from him, subtlety will induce him to exchange it for a rattle. The power of knowledge, therefore, as well as of vested authority, must be placed in the hands of the many, ere that covenant of the good of all, their liberty, can be secure.

The final question then comes to be, is the present state of knowledge in Great Britain, such as to render it prudent to entrust the many with the keeping of a jewel so precious as their own liberty?

It may be replied, that, though knowledge is not, as it ought to be, universal; yet that a very large body of the people, (well entitled to the appellation of the many) have become intelligent: That the light which is abroad, is, at the present crisis, peculiarly directed to guard the very foundations of liberty; and that there is, withal, a growing thirst for knowledge, rendering it certain that one of the first uses that would be made by the many, of any power entrusted to them, would be the removal of every obstacle to that extension, of knowledge which must, eventually, place their rights and liberties on a rock never to be shaken. While, were this duty, (the removal of the obstacles to knowledge) entrusted to the few, with a clause in their lease of power, that that lease should continue, until the many were fully enlightened, when, alas, would the hindrances to knowledge begin to be removed?

CHAPTER XX.

ON PURE REPRESENTATION, HEREDITARY LEGISLATION, THE HEREDITARY PEERAGE, PARLIAMENTARY DURATION, THE BALLOT, AND MUNICIPAL REFORM.

“ When property opposes measures for the purity of the House of Commons, it lifts the hand of suicide against itself, by rendering its possessors objects of hatred and suspicion.”

Sir Peter Payne, Bart.

THE expression, “ government of the many,” may probably alarm some timid minds with visions of tumult, civil war, breach of faith with the public creditor, and an agrarian law; but by the government of the many here spoken of, nothing more is meant than representation without corruption, or entire freedom of election to both houses of Parliament, and immediate responsibility of members of both houses to their constituents. That is a power vested in constituents, not only to call upon, but to compel members to quit their seats, though in the midst of a session, the moment, by ceasing to

express the opinions of the majority of their constituents, they cease to be their representatives. For though each individual, before he becomes a representative, is no doubt entitled to his individual opinion, in common with the rest of the constituency of his county or borough, he resigns his title to such individual opinion when he assumes the character of the representative, delegate, or messenger of other men, and undertakes to convey to the assembled representatives of all the constituencies of the kingdom, in the condensed and convenient form of one voice, the opinions of the majority of the constituency of his own county or borough. If his private opinions be those of the minority of his constituents, he must, on undertaking to represent the majority, consent to have his private opinions swamped among those of the rest of the discomfited minority.

Did any majority ever seriously intend, instead of electing a representative, to appoint a dictator?

That members of the house of Lords should equally be chosen by, and be equally responsible to the community to be legislated for, it would be an insult to the common sense of the age to treat as a questionable point.

The inconvenience to the public of attempting to blend the anomalies of barbarous ages with the improving institutions of the present time, must have been rendered sufficiently obvious by the transactions of the last session.

The House of Commons—a committee of the nation, delegated by the nation to manage the affairs of the nation, meet, deliberate, and make enactments, to forward the wishes of the nation. The House of Lords—a few individuals not chosen by the nation, consequently deriving no authority from the nation, and therefore possessed of none over the affairs of the nation, meet, and are permitted, (out of pure courtesy, no doubt, to ancient institutions,) to render null and void the enactments made by the nation through their chosen representatives.

Yet we have left off ploughing by the horses' tails, and burning witches, both exceedingly ancient institutions! In fact, the preservation of this relic of barbarism converted nearly the whole proceedings of the last session into mere child's play:—a naughty brother showing off, as an incipient lord of the creation, by tumbling down, as fast as erected, each card house his little sister built. John Bull is proverbially fond of sight seeing, and of infant prodigies of every description, from infant Rosciuses and infant Lyras, to calculating and double-sighted boys; but fifty millions per annum is rather too much for honest John to pay for looking on at sports so idle as those thus enacted in our Upper House by the spoiled-through-life babies of a second childhood!

Nay, what do the injudicious advocates of an unchosen House of Peers mean to infer? Would

they have the people of England to believe that the peerage has an interest apart from, and even at variance with, the well-being of the nation at large? and that its functions, as a part of the so much boasted constitution, is to maintain that separate interest at the expense of the well-being of the nation at large? For, if not at the expense of the well-being of the nation at large, why dread, or refuse responsibility to the nation at large? Surely the sense of the nation at large, acting through a necessarily friendly House of Commons, would be very unlikely to sanction an interference with any privilege that did not seriously interfere with the nation's vital well-being; and if privileges which might be used for the perpetration of wrong, are not intended to be so used, why retain them merely to prove sources of jealous apprehension, and therefore of ill-will?

If, on the other hand, the peerage would indig-
nantly repel the supposition of having any unjust
or selfish separate interests, and would be con-
sidered a part of the nation, desiring nothing but
the prosperity of that whole of which it is a part,
why should it object to a certain number of its
body being chosen by the nation, to assist the
nation's other representatives to promote the in-
terests of the nation, instead of requiring that its
whole body should legislate unchosen, for the pro-
fessed purpose of representing itself separately?

If separate interests are to be acknowledged in

the state, and represented by separate houses of parliament appropriated to themselves, with each a veto on whatever has been decided in any other house, there would be no end to the absurdities in which a principle, itself so absurd, would involve us. Every separate trade, choosing to call itself a separate interest might, with much greater show of fairness, complain that the few members of Parliament who may happen to be connected in their private affairs with its said supposed separate interests, are swamped among the landed aristocracy and sons and brothers of peers* in the House of Commons, and therefore claim to have its house of parliament in which its members should be unchosen, hereditary legislators; their function, the maintenance of their own supposed separate interests, with a veto for that purpose on all bills passed in any of the other thus numerous houses of Parliament, however necessary the passing of such bills might be to the interests of the rest of the community. This would be a beautiful following out of the principle of that paralyzing of influences, called the balancing of interests, which has been so ignorantly lauded; while its only operation has been to retard the progress of all that is useful, honest, and wise. Yet would this ridiculous supposition be not a whit more absurd,

* On two late divisions, March 1835, sixty sons of peers voted in the House of Commons with the minister against the people.—*Boast of the Morning Post.*

nor yet so absurd, as is a House of Peers representing only itself, and nullifying the acts of a nation : for the trades are of some use ; the peers of none !

An infinite number, indeed, of distinct assemblies, deliberating on their own special affairs, with the veto on all vested in one general assembly, truly representing all the other assemblies, would be a very natural and rational order of things. But, a veto vested in any one of those assemblies, not chosen by the rest, therefore not even professing to represent the rest, reduces all the representation, by which the other bodies were chosen, to a shadow without a substance ; the whole mummery of a mixed government, to a farce ; and constitutes the unchosen assembly which has the veto, an absolute monarch : of how many men this monarch may chance be composed, is quite immaterial to the fact of such an assembly being an absolute monarch. Such an absolute monarch, too, is a much more dangerous and mischievous being to the nation at large, than any individual absolute monarch ; for the simple reason, that it must require much larger contributions of the labour or wealth-creating energies of the nation to supply the unjust desires of numerous tyrants and their families, than to supply all the desires, however exorbitant or unjust, of any one tyrant and his family. But, the individual despot, though less injurious to the mass of the people, is more danger-

ous to the few whom property and education bring the nearest to capricious exercises of his individual will ; the few, therefore, early discover the evils of suffering an individual to be absolute : instead, however, of abolishing absolute monarchy, their object is to reduce the individual monarch to a puppet in their own hands, and transfer the absolute monarchy to themselves. When, however, as at present, the spread of education has begun to enlighten the masses of the people, it becomes their business, by that light to detect every species of sleight of hand, and take care that the veto, which is the power, shall not be vested in any few ; but, by the perfect operation of the representative system, be rendered a pure condensation of the soberly and deliberately weighed views of the whole community.

On the subject, then, of the share which the peerage ought to take in the legislation ; the only rational question seems to be, shall a convenient number be, from time to time, chosen by the nation from among the peers, to form a second deliberative assembly ; or shall any number that can obtain the confidence of the electors join the commons, and taking seats in their assembly, mingle votes with theirs, without distinction.

The latter appears to be the least complicated, and much the most rational arrangement ; for what interest or privilege can a man of landed property, merely because a title happens to be added to his

name, have to defend, in defence of which he could not stand up in a House of Commons, filled with other men of landed property, a very considerable number of whom are, besides, the sons and brothers of his brother peers and himself.

In the feudal times, indeed, when the lords or barons represented the country or landed interest, and the commons, the towns or mercantile interests, there might have been, (though always on short-sighted grounds,) some shadow of two interests ; but now that lords and commons form one aristocracy, almost one family, all representing and guarding, alas ! but too selfishly, the wealth already created, and all having a personal interest in taxing the wealth to be created or power or act of creating wealth ; such taxes constituting the perquisites of themselves and their relations ; what need of a peculiar strong-hold for a section, or portion of this, (without such strong-hold) but too strong ; and, for the frailty of human free-will, but too severely tempted family party, merely to hamper legislation. Except, indeed, with the ulterior, and unconstitutional view of making (on the pretext of veneration for the constitution) one close corporation business of the whole affairs of the nation, and thus evading even the small portion of constitutional influence which industry might else possess, despite what may be termed the property union, by rendering the only peaceable safeguard of the liberties of the people, representation, a mere mockery.

So far, therefore, from the Peerage being insufficiently represented, if legislatively it were amalgamated with the Commons, its influence, together with that of the property biases of the Commons, would still be much too great, and therefore still require the additional corrective of a property tax : for, whether property be represented by titled men of property, or by untitled men of property ; in one assembly, or in two assemblies ; it is still property only, as already urged, that is virtually represented. Industry may have a free choice of its nominal representatives, and a few of these may be philanthropists, and to their eternal honour plead its cause nobly, though in vain ; but, without a property tax, industry, or the wealth-creating power of the nation, must always be dependent for its full measure of justice, on how many members of the legislative assembly or assemblies, are thus philanthropists, or honest men, in the widest and noblest sense of the appellation ; that is, men lifted by philosophical views of that good-will to all which includes equal justice, enforced by sacred obligation, above all temptation to yield to the unjust desires of selfishness. Taking into account, however, the as yet imperfectly cultivated state of human reason, and the consequently, as yet, selfish leanings of human free-will ; if we would have industry cordially represented by the fellow feelings of men of property in general, we must commute every other tax for one on already created property ;

that thus the property class may have a selfish interest in making every industrious individual in England rich enough to pay a portion of the property tax ; or, in other words, to assist the already rich in carrying the burdens of the state.

HEREDITARY PEERAGE.

It will here be said, that the hereditary peerage is attacked. No such thing ! Hereditary legislation alone is objected to. Distinct from this, hereditary titles are quite as harmless as hereditary surnames ; as long, at least, as the hard-working public are not called upon for contributions to maintain, in either the titled or untitled aristocracy, the dignity of idleness, whether by the direct operation of a pension list, or the already explained indirect co-operation of patronage with primogeniture.

Nay, an hereditary peerage might be rendered not only harmless but beneficial to the public : for those who fill high stations, live in the eye of the public, and by the example they set, must exercise a good or evil influence on the morals of the public. Therefore, if in the general march of improvement, a more than ordinary share of virtue in the exalted should become an hereditary honour ! exalted rank may become the bright sanctuary of a purifying example, to which, those with less

leisure for high entertainments in wisdom, and consequent virtue, may, with advantage to themselves, yield the true homage of heartfelt respect.*

PARLIAMENTARY DURATION.

The defiance, at which we too often see members of parliament set the wishes of their constituents, as soon as they succeed in getting elected, calls imperatively, if not for the utmost possible shortening of the duration of parliaments, for what would be a much more effectual check on each individual member, without incurring the confusion of general elections, namely, that each member should hold his seat at the will of his constituents.

With this safeguard to liberty, there seems no reasonable reason why parliament, as a body, should not last as long as the nation lasts. If it be deemed necessary that the sovereignty of the executive should never die, it appears to be full as reasonable and quite as necessary, that the sovereignty of the parliament, which is, or rather ought to be the sovereignty of the people, should never die, yet, that parliament, while thus as a body immortal, should always truly represent the

* The Peers are particularly requested not to turn this honourable appointment into a sinecure,

existing state of public opinion. Each individual member should always be removable at the pleasure of his constituents, whenever he ceases to give them entire satisfaction, that is, whenever he ventures to falsify the message he has been sent to deliver, by misrepresenting instead of representing, the sentiments of his constituents, or when he dares to overturn, with his single hand, the most valuable of the few valuable institutions of the country, and disfranchise, at his individual pleasure, a whole county or borough by giving no vote, or, in other words, by refusing to deliver the message, or condensation of the votes of his constituents, which had been entrusted to him ; and thus, on the false pretext implied by the very act of becoming their representative, absolutely swindle some hundreds of honest and confiding men out of the only legitimate means they possessed of exercising their portion of constitutional influence, in that great national assembly, in which their affairs are being conducted, and their money being voted away.

The member who so acts, is surely chargeable with treason against the tranquillity of the state, for he wilfully closes the safety valve which is the best security against explosion. He wilfully runs the risk, for some private purpose of his own, of driving previously sober-minded and peaceably-intentioned men, into tumult, and possibly bloodshed, in pursuit of that common justice, which he has shut them out from the lawful mode of attain-

ing. While, an honest representative, on the contrary would have calmed every anxious feeling before it became an angry one, by making it clear to his constituents, that their legitimate portion of influence had been placed in the scale they desired: and that, therefore, if the majority of the nation were with them, the question or questions at issue would be decided according to their wishes. Thus, honestly dealt with constituencies, accustomed to yield to rational majorities in their own local assemblies, would, in general, be found ready to bow without a murmur to the great majority of the nation. Provided always, it were well ascertained, that no undue influences having been used by any faction, either with electors or with members, the nation was indeed truly represented.

The plan here proposed would also have the advantage of rendering future appeals to the "sense of the people," by means of sudden dissolutions, unnecessary; for the "sense of the people" would be thus in perpetual, visible operation, adjusting and rectifying itself daily, and its actual state, therefore, always palpable on the face of the then actual representation. Thus, dreamed of reactions of opinion could never again agitate the land by their supposed or alleged existence, while supposed to have no constitutional means of exhibiting themselves; for every opinion which germinated would, on the plan proposed, have an immediate and legitimate opportunity of blossoming and bearing fruit

on the spot which gave it birth, without deranging the general business, or disturbing the general tranquillity of the country.

While another, and a very serious advantage, attendant on the proposed arrangement, would be, that members and candidates would find it necessary to substitute, for the present demoralizing system of bribery, loud profession, and intemperate treating by periodical fits ; with sympathy destroying intervals between, of seven years of haughty neglect ; a steady perseverance in respectable, amiable, and consistent conduct, in all their social relations ; whether as neighbours, as landlords, or as legislators. In short, to get electors into riotous, tipsy good humour, once in seven years, and to obtain and preserve their sober good opinion through life, would be very soon found to require, and, therefore, call into operation, processes as different as the ends in view !

For the purpose of a perfect understanding between members and their constituents, it would be desirable that constituencies should hold frequent meetings during each recess, their member or members presiding ; and that at those meetings, every important measure likely to be discussed during the ensuing session should be considered, and every separate question, on which there existed a difference of opinion, be put to the vote : while members should be bound by the sacred trust they undertake in becoming representatives,

(that being in itself a pledge) to vote in Parliament on each question, as the majority of their constituents voted. During the sitting of Parliament also, the constituencies should hold similar meetings, only of course without the assistance of their necessarily absent members. At those meetings they should discuss any new questions which might arise in Parliament. Those questions also should be put to the vote, and authenticated lists of the votes of the majorities sent to the members for their guidance, remembering always, that the constitutional weight of a constituency in making laws, is trust property, which no representative can appropriate to his own use, without dishonesty as absolute as that of the money trustee who pockets trust money. But possibly legislative wisdom has discovered two species of dishonesties—the gentlemanlike, and the vulgar; so essentially different that they have appointed garters and titles, as the wages of the one, ropes and the gallows of the other! Unhappily, however, the simple-minded public can discern only the dissimilarity of the wages, while the crimes to them appear the same.

By these means, a man of honesty and ability might represent the same constituency in Parliament during the whole of a long and honored life, without the expense or trouble of ever being elected but the once. During each recess, such a man would have, at the meetings already named,

fair and open opportunities of using the honorable influences of character, learning, and ability, in instructing and convincing his constituents, on any points on which they might be less well informed than himself. This indeed ought to be considered among the most important of his duties. On the other hand, whenever the honesty, learning, and ability, for the supposed possession of which a member had been chosen, were found wanting, constituencies would thus always have the power, without the mischievous and unjust necessity of awaiting the expiration of any Parliament, whether septennial, triennial, or annual, of calling to the poll any candidate, or candidates, from whom they hoped better things.

Members of Parliament accustomed to the old corrupt system, will, of course, exclaim loudly against the idea of being reduced (as they would say) to mere puppets !

But one moment's reflection will suffice to show such persons, that in so exclaiming, it is the principle of representation to which they are objecting. It would be a childish mistake, indeed, were constituencies to confound the power of paying this man, or that man, the compliment of sending him to Parliament ; with the power of influencing the laws to be framed for their own and their children's future welfare. This, surely, is the principle of representation :—any system,

therefore, called representation, which does not contain this principle, is a practical lie!

Of what avail was it to give the called for franchise to great towns, and northern, and southern divisions of populous counties, if an individual member of Parliament, after being chosen to represent one of such, has the power of virtually disfranchising the whole constituency, and vesting the concentrated franchise in his own person? Of what avail our long fought battle, and at length achieved victory over rotten boroughs, if rotten members can effect their own, or a dishonest minister's purposes as certainly? Nay, the mouldering wall was, of the two, the least mischievous instrument of mischief; for the price of every member who chooses to sell himself to a minister, must of course be paid by the people, whose rights he sells with his own honour, to make the latter a marketable commodity.

If, then, real representation be the spirit of the British constitution, let not those who kneel down and worship the grossest abuses, on pretence of veneration for every part of the constitution, be the foremost to deprive that constitution of the soul which would have enabled it to defy corruption, and then spice the mummy for the adoration of future ages!!!

Indeed, members of Parliament are the very last persons who are entitled to complain of the numerous precautions here suggested being found

necessary ; for it is a melancholy truth, that it is they who have made them so ! If the nation could find honest servants, she would need no locks to the treasury of her liberties—But,

Who, alas, is honest ?

The echo answers who ?*

THE BALLOT.

Every argument, which has been used in favour of pure representation, is also an argument in favour of vote by ballot : for, while the rich are corrupt, and the poor helpless, representation, without the ballot, cannot be pure ! That is to say, bribes and threats will influence votes ; and those, therefore, who are rich enough and dishonest enough, to use such means of obtaining power, will be our rulers ; nor can we expect that the power which has been obtained dishonestly will be used honestly !

The ballot then, whether good or bad in itself, will be necessary as long as mankind shall continue to be divided into the rich and the poor, and selfishness to have unjust desires.

Let us even suppose for a moment, that the spread of a reasoning education had rendered the whole body of electors, to a man, too intelligent

* Where is my child ?

The echo answers where ?

Byron.

as to their real ultimate interests, and too honest in feeling to accept a bribe ; still, intimidation, in the hands of those unprincipled enough to use such means, is an engine of irresistible power : who that has his bread, and the bread of his children to earn, although his sturdy spirit might have spurned a bribe, can nerve his imagination to view undaunted the long perspective of indefinite ills, and gradual decay, with which he is threatened by insolent power, rendered malignant by the mockery of law which forbids it to crush at once, the rebel against its imperious will.

How unsparingly, how unblushingly, and, unhappily, how effectually this engine of intimidation has been used, and is used at all elections, the almost personal experience of every individual in Great Britain can testify.

It may be attempted to be retorted, that the evil influences of bribery and intimidation are used on both sides ; but even granting that the avowed advocates of honest measures were likely, in general, to be found as active in the use of dishonest means, as the avowed supporters of old abuses ; still, those who have long profited by corruption, must necessarily have more wealth both to give as canvassers, and to withhold as customers, or landlords, than those whose sense of justice has, possibly, been sharpened by the very fact of their being, on the score of wealth, the victims of injustice.

Nay, the abettors of corruption are not ashamed to boast openly, that they can stand the expenses of repeated elections longer than their opponents can. In other words, that they consider it a good speculation, to purchase the power of perpetuating wrong, with a part of the wealth they have accumulated by perpetrating wrong !

Are the liberties of the nation then put up to auction, and are they to be knocked down to the highest bidder ? Poor John Bull ! Must he first have his pockets picked ; and when, in consequence, he is short of cash, his estate bought up with his own money, by the self same knights of the nimble fingered trade who had extracted it from his pockets ?

As to the objection, that there is something ungenerous, and " unenglish," in the concealment of the ballot it is quite absurd coming from a class of Englishmen, who use the prudent mystery of the said unenglish mask, in all their own club and pleasure arrangements. If men of liberal education, and independent circumstances, think there is no dishonour in screening themselves, while performing a fancied duty to exclusive society, from soreness of feeling, and possibly hostile encounters beneath the convenient shelter of the ballot, why should the self-same cloak be considered too shabby, or too unenglish a costume, to be worn by the shopkeeper, or the tenant, in cases of serious necessity, to preserve himself, his wife, and his chil-

dren, from the utter ruin held in terrorem over him, by some wealthy but unprincipled customer or landlord, for his honest performance of a real duty to his country.

MUNICIPAL REFORM.

One thing more is indispensable to honest representation : that is the completion of a thorough municipal reform, having for its basis the principle, that corporation privileges are a trust for the benefit of the people at large ; and that those privileges, therefore, must be placed on a system of real representation, subject to the control of their constituencies. Until this be effected, corporations will not only retain their own gross local abuses, which in the aggregate constitute a great national abuse, but they will also be the strong holds of remaining corruption in Parliament ; they being, from the undue and unconstitutional influence, which the abuse of the said privileges enables them to use at elections, a mischievous remnant of the close borough system.

CHAPTER XXI.

ON THE AWFUL RESPONSIBILITY OF VOTING IN PARLIAMENT.

THE awful responsibility, in addition to the dishonesty, of giving a vote in Parliament on individual authority, is, unhappily seldom, if ever appreciated as it ought to be. Were the remodellers of our penal code, to place murders, robberies, and careless, or interested votes in Parliament on the same catalogue of guilty deeds, the justness of the classification would doubtless be questioned; yet few, in modern times, have been the victims of direct crime, compared with the many who have died of broken hearts, broken constitutions, and lack of food, shelter, and raiment; or pined, through a lingering existence, in hopeless poverty, in consequence of unwise regulations, made laws by insufficiently considered votes, given with a view to enhance the wealth of the already rich of this country; few, if any one of whom, it is to be presumed, would have directly

deprived of life or of property a single fellow creature, to have been possessed of the wealth of worlds ! But this is not sufficient : beings gifted with reasoning and reflecting powers are surely bound to examine into the most remote tendencies, as well as the more immediate consequences of their actions ; and must not hope that, having been instrumental in producing circumstances out of which have arisen deaths or unjust transfers of property, they can continue innocent of the frightful and disgraceful crimes of murder or of robbery, merely because the operation of the causes which brought these inflictions on their fellow men, was indirect. If a vote carelessly given in merely following the lead of party, tend, at any distance of time, to enrich one class, or one individual, unjustly, at the expense of another class or individual, or to shorten, through misery, or unnecessary (that is to say, not strictly defensive) warfare, or any other cause, the life of a fellow creature, if the tendency be one that was within the reach of human foresight to have perceived on the most strict and severe examination of the subject, he who gives his vote without this strict and severe examination is guilty of murder, or of robbery, or of both, as the case may be. To plead hasty or mistaken views is no apology ; the neglect of that study which would have mastered the science of legislation, and brought within the scope of his mental vision the ultimate consequences of mea-

sure, was a wilful, and, in a man willingly taking upon himself the functions of a legislator, an unjustifiable act.

The law punishes harbour pilots, in some cases, even with death, if convicted of ignorance of the duty they have undertaken. Is the great vessel of the state of less importance than any one of our gallant hearts of oak, valuable though they be? Is its mighty helm to be grasped without a thought above individual ambition, and no responsibility incurred? If such be the wreckless will of man in power, God, on that great day when he shall judge the earth, will reverse the unrighteous sentence!

Let, then, that pilot of the state, who would have a conscience void of offence, take for the compass of his legislation the unerring principle of good-will to all, necessarily including equal justice,—that good-will not being to all, which sanctions injustice to any.

Thus only can he stand discharged in full of his awful responsibility. For good-will to all being the visibly revealed will of God, the great Ruler of the universe himself will dispose of the consequences of all actions, thoughts, and words, deriving their impulse from obedience to, and co-operation with his own Almighty purpose, thus visibly revealed.

CHAPTER XXII.

JOHN BULL AWAKE.

"Now observe, if the whole of what was stolen from the public, by means of all these jobs, had been spent honestly in the public service, the constitution would have wanted the zealous support of a great band of robbers delighted with the present, and fearful of change. 'It works well,' George Canning used to exclaim; countless plunderers respond, 'It works well!'"

England and America.

THE spread of education is, in fact, rendering the peaceable continuance of abuses impossible.

During the long night of total ignorance, numerous plunderers, great and small, walked abroad, and, favoured by the sheltering darkness, forfeited not even their respectability. Suddenly the light of day has broken in upon them; each devious way and crooked path lies revealed; yet, absorbed in the headlong pursuit of gain, they seem as though they perceived it not, and continue, with scarcely abated zeal, their unhallowed calling, while the newly awakened public stand looking on, as yet scarcely crediting that they see aright.

John Bull rubs his eyes, and looks again !

In his most ignorant days he had been told to keep his hands from picking and stealing : this much the greatest enemies to enlightening the multitude had thought it safe to teach him.

The fine clothes and glittering equipages of some of the *employés* dazzle honest John's powers of vision not a little ; but, notwithstanding, he thinks he sees every man's hand in his neighbour's pocket, which he opines cannot be right. How long this problem might have puzzled our friend John, there is no saying, had not conviction, just at the moment been rather unpleasantly brought home to him by perceiving, that while he flattered himself he was but a spectator of the scene, his own pockets had been turned inside out ! Now, John is not the man to put up with this ; he will call the police first, 'tis true, but if they do not come, he will, ere long, take his own part.

THE END.

LONDON :

SCHULZE AND CO., 13, POLAND STREET.

F.C. 11/12



